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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the causes and consequences of teacher stress and effective means of stress management. Responses to a survey questionnaire were received from 800 primary teachers in New Zealand public schools (a response rate of 67.3 percent). Six situations which cause teacher stress were identified: (1) work overload; (2) expectations of parents and others; (3) relationships in the classroom; (4) unsupportive parents and difficult children; (5) the physical demands of teaching; and (6) little control over school events. The frequency with which these occurred and the levels of anxiety and tiredness associated with them were reported. Six specific coping strategies were identified: (1) rational task-oriented behavior; (2) adopting a conservative approach to teaching; (3) utilizing colleague support; (4) putting things into perspective; (5) becoming less involved; and (6) attempting to ride out the situation. Appendixes include a copy of the questionnaire, as well as self-awareness exercises teachers may use for assessing the events of the school day and developing coping mechanisms. A five-page bibliography is also included. (DJ)

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STRESS:

Causes, Consequences & Coping Strategies For Teachers

Final report on research commissioned by
the New Zealand Educational Institute, 1981-1982

by Philip Dewe

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ABSTRACT

This report is about teachers, the events which cause their stress and how they cope with them. It is not about teachers being under more stress than any other group. It is an attempt to identify, for teachers, the causes and consequences of their stress so that more constructive ways may be considered for helping them cope. It offers and identifies a number of strategies for coping with stress. All this is designed to provide teachers with a means whereby they can become "more aware" of those situations which cause their stress, why they react and respond to certain situations in the way that they do and how this information can be used to identify coping strategies. In essence the information is provided in order to develop a sense of "self-awareness" so that teachers can continue to enjoy the satisfactions of teaching. It is much more than just a compendium of negative features associated with teaching.

The research identified six situations which cause teachers stress. These include: work overload, the expectations of parents and others, relationships in the classroom, unsupportive parents and difficult children, the physical demands of teaching, and little control over different school events. The frequency with which these situations occurred and the levels of anxiety and tiredness associated with them were all reported. Using this information to identify and analyse stressful situations was also provided.

A second focus of this research was on identifying the specific strategies teachers said they used to cope with stress. Six coping strategies were identified. These included: rational task-oriented behaviour, adopting a conservative approach to teaching, utilizing colleague support, putting things into perspective, becoming less involved, and attempting to ride out the situation. Again this information along with information on exercise, relaxation, meditation and a philosophy of life were presented in order to increase the teachers' awareness of issues of stress and coping.

Teaching in the 1980's and the experiences faced by teachers is described in the final chapter of this report. These descriptions highlight and support the view that teachers' stress does not reside solely in the job, or in the teacher, but in the transaction that takes place between the two. Thus those events which at one time are the very things which cause stress are at other times the challenges and joys which make teaching such a worthwhile profession.

CHAPTER 1: WHAT IS STRESS?

Background

This report is about teachers, the events which cause their stress and how they cope with them. It is not about teachers being under more stress than any other professional group. It simply looks at the different sorts of events which cause stress, how frequently those events occur and the different types of strategies that are used to cope with such situations.

While the report focuses on stress, it is not meant to be seen as simply a compendium of all the negative features associated with teaching, although, of course, many of these aspects are highlighted. The point made throughout this report, and one that should be borne in mind, is that those events which at one time can cause stress are at other times the very events that give great satisfaction and challenge. Therefore, the emphasis is on establishing the presence of negative features and providing a means whereby positive features can be highlighted and developed.

The context within which teaching takes place is also important. In addition to classroom and school environments - social, economic and political issues and policies all seem to influence the teaching profession. This influence may be covert - by regarding teachers as responsible for, and the guardians of, the moral well-being and social development of children. Alternatively, as is becoming more frequent, the influence may be in an overt manner - by requiring teachers to perform certain duties which extend their jobs beyond the traditional teaching role.

Against all these pressures, changes and influences, this research on teacher stress was carried out. A number of chapters have been included which look at just what it is like to be a teacher in the eighties. It is through this perspective that the results of this research should be viewed and discussed.

Defining stress

If this report is all about the sorts of stresses teachers face, then what is the best way of defining stress? To some extent, stress is best defined as a **stimulus** - that is, an event or situation, outside of the individual, which can lead to stress. Stress can also be seen as a **response** - that is, some type of reaction, either behavioural or physical, that indicates the individual is under stress. Because these approaches have advantages and disadvantages, perhaps the best way to define stress is to incorporate both of them into a definition where stress is seen as some sort of **transaction** between the individual and the environment.

If we think of stress in those terms, then it results from situations which the individual perceives as threatening and which require the individual to initiate or withhold certain actions in an attempt to overcome, endure, or reduce the threatening circumstances. By looking at stress in this way, we cover not only the stimuli which cause the emotional or physical responses, but also the way in which we react to them. The definitional focus is on coping, the situations which cause the discomfort, and whether our coping strategies have been effective in reducing that discomfort.

Stress is not a neutral word. We typically associate it with pressure, anxiety, and tension. However, not all stress is bad. It is a necessary part of everyday life and helps to energise and motivate behaviour and to stimulate creativity, which are necessary to life and well-being. The way in which we adapt to, and cope with, stress determines whether stress, for us, will be harmful or beneficial.

Therefore, depending on how we cope, stress can be either **disruptive/damaging (distress)** or **positive/productive (eustress)**. *"Eustress"* is a term first used by Selye (1977) and is derived from the Greek *"eu"*, meaning *"positive"*.

More contemporary approaches to stress emphasise the importance of recognising stressful situations, understanding the impact that stress can have, and developing effective means for coping with stress. Two other points are important, however.

The first is that our concern is with what has been described as the everyday annoyances of life - *"hassles"* - which cause us to fret and which seem to be unrelenting or frequently unrelieved. Sometimes all this is referred to as *"endemic"* stress - those situations in which persisting, repetitive events (frequently small in scale and embedded in daily life) continually confront the individual and produce a noticable increase in stress (Fried, 1982). This report is not focusing on critical life events, although quite obviously, the impact of such events extends to all parts of our lives.

The second point concerns individual differences - that is, something which is stressful for one person is not necessarily stressful for another. Each of us may respond to different situations in different ways, and the duration or intensity of an experience or event affects each of us differently. Our physiological response patterns may also vary enormously.

Stress and work

A substantial number of events and situations have the potential for causing or inducing stress. Whether they do, depends on the meaning which the individual attributes to them and the effectiveness of coping strategies employed. The importance of all the varying aspects of our lives is recognised, as well as the fact that stresses can accumulate in one part of our lives and spill over into another. However, this report concentrates, in the main, on the impact of only one part of our lives - work and the potential stress which may result from work-related activities.

Work, like any other setting, exerts its own set of unique forces on the individual. Conforming to these organisational and professional forces often has a cost. This report is principally concerned with that cost, together with the causes and coping strategies.

Work, for many people, is or can be stressful. It is important, when thinking about the work/stress relationship, to avoid a polarisation of views which either over-emphasise the problem or suggest that there is no such evidence linking work and stress. It is best to view the relationship between work and stress cautiously, but in a way which reflects the general feeling expressed by a number of authors and summed up by Kasl: *"There is a good deal of supportive and indirect evidence linking work and mental health"* (1977:100).

Each of us has a set of ideas about how work and stress are related. In a way, these ideas constitute a theory for each of us. In most cases, these ideas will be based on our own experiences. Whether or not these ideas are right or wrong, they will influence our reactions to stress and our attempts to cope with stressful situations. Yet the importance of any theory lies in the understanding it provides of why certain relationships exist.

In order to develop an understanding of why individuals become stressed at work and how they respond to these work situations, some sort of model is required - a formal interpretation of the theory. What then does the model of work stress look like? The basic properties of the traditional work stress model, as set out in **Figure 1**, are: **the work situation** (stimulus), which places certain demands on the individual; **the personality** of the individual, which conditions his/her response to such demands; and **the actions** (response) of such interactions, which may result in physical or mental illness.

The model works by making reference to the fact that each of us operates in terms of a *"steady state"*, or physiological/psychological equilibrium, which is characterised by feelings of well-being. Stress occurs when this steady state is disrupted, usually as a result of some sort of misfit between the individual and the environment.

If stress does occur when the demands of a situation tax the individual's abilities to deal with them (causing a disruption to the steady functioning), then what sorts of things in a work situation bring about this disruption or imbalance? The causes of stress at work, or stressors (**Figure 1: Box 1 - see page 4**), can take many forms.

At least one author (Cooper, 1970) identifies six sources of work stress. These include: the characteristics of the job itself, the role of the person in the organisation, interpersonal relationships at work, career development pressures, the climate and structure of the organisation, and problems associated with the interaction between the organisation and the outside world.

At a more detailed level, these include: the physical strains of work, excessive travel, long hours, too much work to do in the time available, the job becoming more and more sophisticated, conflicting work demands placed on the individual, relationships with superiors/subordinates/colleagues, a lack of information on which to base decisions, not knowing how work performance is being judged, little participation in decision making, and conflicts between home and work.

Whether or not these demands cause stress depends of course on how the individual interprets the situation and how s/he copes with it. This is why the model shows the demands of the work situation (stressors) being moderated by the characteristics of the individual (**Box 2**). What is going to be a taxing experience for one individual, may for another be a challenge - each individual responding to the situation in his/her own way.

Many factors may contribute to the way in which each of us responds to demanding work situations. These include such differences as: personality, levels of ability (particularly as a person gets older), mid-life difficulties, the relevance and meaning placed on work, an understanding of motivations and need satisfactions, levels of competence and expertise, and certain behaviour patterns (particularly the coronary prone, Type A, behaviour).

Responses to a demanding work situation (**Box 3**) can be many and varied. As pointed out previously, these responses are influenced by the characteristics of the individual. The sorts of responses most frequently reported include biochemical or physiological changes - such as: elevated blood pressure, increased heart rate, increases in certain hormones (especially adrenalin), and rapid breathing. Also linked to different work stresses are various behavioural responses, including: reduced performance, absenteeism, job turnover, dissatisfaction, anger and boredom.

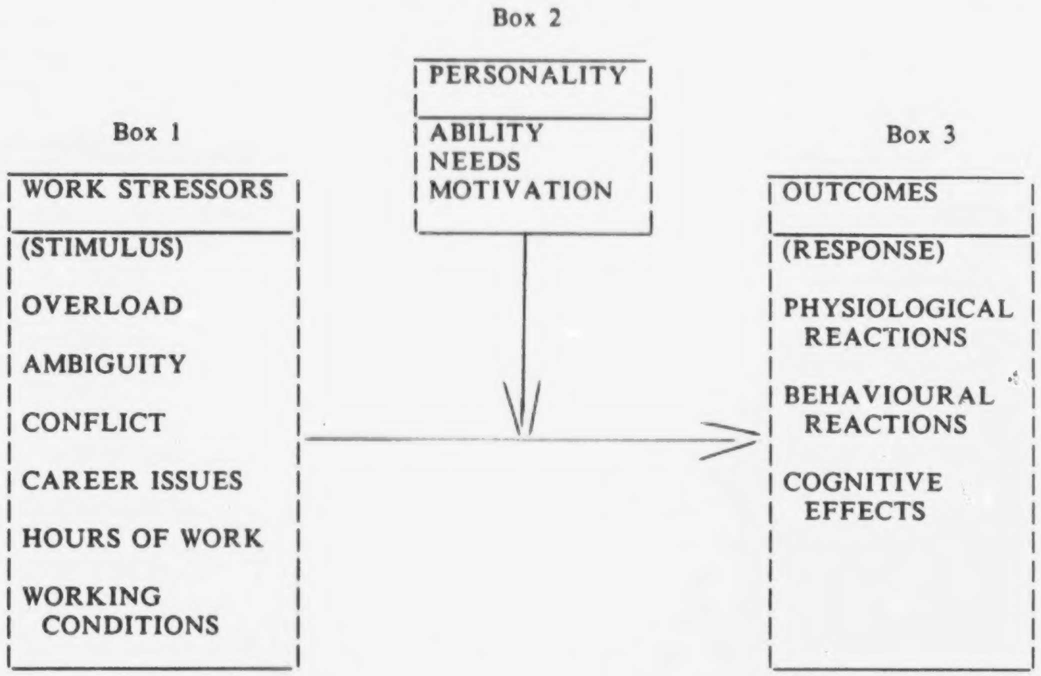
Finally, all these responses may contribute in some way or another to what has been described as *"diseases of maladaption"* - that is, when we fail to adapt or cope with the situation. Such *"diseases"* include: coronary heart disease, ulcers, allergies, headaches, tension, anxiety and exhaustion.

Two points to remember when thinking about the emotional and physical responses to stressful situations are:

1) Many illnesses can no longer be explained in terms of a specific or single cause - the concept of cause having lost some of its clarity and meaning. In fact, there is some difficulty in answering the question, *"What is a cause?"* Rather, it is more appropriate to consider the idea of general vulnerability or risk; and thus, work stressors are just one of a number of factors which increase our susceptibility to certain illnesses.

2) Some of the responses we link to stressful work situations (anger, drinking, smoking, job turnover, absenteeism) can be described more in terms of coping strategies. This is not to say that they do not result in detrimental physiological or psychological ill health, but that the distinction between stress responses and coping attempts is a difficult one to make and one that is frequently overlooked.

FIGURE 1: TRADITIONAL WORK STRESS MODEL


Box 2
PERSONALITY
ABILITY
NEEDS
MOTIVATION
Box 1
WORK STRESSORS
(STIMULUS)
OVERLOAD
AMBIGUITY
CONFLICT
CAREER ISSUES
HOURS OF WORK
WORKING CONDITIONS
Box 3
OUTCOMES
(RESPONSE)
PHYSIOLOGICAL REACTIONS
BEHAVIOURAL REACTIONS
COGNITIVE EFFECTS

If, as some authors suggest (Warr and Wall, 1985), well-being at work is a desirable end in itself, what is being done about it? A number of organisations and associations, recognising the consequences of work stress, have begun to consider ways of minimising its effects.

The New Zealand Educational Institute has been a pioneer in the field of counselling of teachers, by teachers, arising from its concern about the mental health of teachers since the nineteen sixties. Counsellors are mainly concerned with assisting teachers under stress, and this research was commissioned in order to provide more information about how individual teachers perceive the degree and cause of their stress and how they cope.

Some responsibility must, of course, rest with the individual. It is important that each of us is aware of the effects that our job has on us, not only while we are at work but also away from work. To this end, it is necessary that we acknowledge the pressure of stress in our work, identify situtations which tax our resources, and evaluate the methods we use to cope with such situations.

By using this information to audit our own feelings and reactions to our job, we are in a better position to initiate change and to develop strategies to improve our well-being and efficiency. Much of this report is designed to provide the information necessary to complete this *"work/self"* analysis and thus to contribute to the quality of working lives.

Research project

The research project was divided into three stages: interviews, collection of information for developing a questionnaire, and distribution of the questionnaire.

Research project - stage I: interviews

In Stage I, information was collected (November-December 1981) from interviews with 145 primary school teachers, who were drawn from nine schools in the lower half of the North Island. To obtain a heterogeneous set of schools and thus a wide range of teaching problems, the schools were categorised by location (major city, provincial centre or rural area), and by movements in the school roll (rising, stable, declining). One school was chosen from each of the resulting categories.

To increase heterogeneity further, the non-rural schools were selected so as to include contributing and intermediate institutions. All teaching staff from the schools were interviewed. Interviews took an average of 30 to 40 minutes to complete, and consisted of the same series of open-ended questions. Replies were written on the interview sheets. Some were entered by the interviewer and some by the interviewee. After introductory questions about the job, the interviewer asked more specific questions about the causes and consequences of stress and how these were coped with.

Of the 145 teachers interviewed, 57 (39.3 per cent) were men, and 88 (60.7 per cent) were women. The average age was 35 years, and 39 per cent had more than 10 years' teaching experience.

Research project - stage II: developing a questionnaire

The information collected from the Stage I interviews was used to develop a questionnaire. As it was important to check whether teachers found the questionnaire adequately reflected the range of experiences they encountered, each participant in Stage II was given the opportunity to comment on the following:

a) Were there any problems that had not been included in the questionnaire?
b) Were there other aspects of stress that had not been mentioned but which they felt were important?
c) Were there any other ways in which the questionnaire could be improved in order to reflect the stresses teachers experience?

Comments relating to (c) were largely concerned with how the data could be used. Most teachers, however, either left blank the space for comment, or simply put in a tick! Analysis of comments on (a) and (b) resulted in two additions to the list of situations causing stress.

In this second stage (March 1982), 250 teachers were randomly selected from the list of teachers employed by the Department of Education as at November 1981, 139 teachers (56 per cent) returned the questionnaire. No follow-up questionnaire was used. Of the 139 who replied, 45 (32 per cent) were men, and 94 (68 per cent) were women. Their average age was 39 years, and most had more than 14 years' teaching experience.

Research project - stage III: distribution and testing of final questionnaire

In this final stage, 1,181 primary school teachers were selected at random from the list of teachers employed by the Department of Education as at May 1982. (The figure represents a randomly selected sample of 1,000 primary school teachers, but when the list was received, it was found to include an additional 181 teachers who were included in the survey.) The questionnaire (Appendix I) was posted in June 1982 to those selected, at their school address. Three weeks later, these teachers were sent a follow-up questionnaire, and by the end of July 1982, 916 questionnaires had been returned.

It was not possible, when selecting the sample, to distinguish full-time teachers from part-time, relieving and special needs teachers employed on a casual basis. As a result, 60 questionnaires were returned, uncompleted, by non-full-time teachers. A further 56 questionnaires were excluded from the analysis because they were either incorrectly or insufficiently completed. The remaining 800 questionnaires made up the data set for the study. This represented a response rate of 67.3 per cent. No attempt was made to follow up the 265 non-respondents. Details of the sample are set out in the following table.

TABLE 1: SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MAIN SAMPLE

(n = 800, Stage III)

BIOGRAPHICAL	
Males	260 (33%)
Females	540 (67%)

Average age:
36 years
(range, 20-64 years)

Marital status:	
Single	153 (19%)
Living together/ Married	593 (74%)
Separated/Divorced/ Widowed	54 (7%)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE	
Year 1 teacher	62 (8%)
Year 2 teacher	53 (7%)
Year 3 teacher	51 (6%)
Year 4 teacher	41 (5%)
Other: Beyond 3rd year of certificated service	591 (74%)

Total certificated service:
12.5 years (average)
(range, 1-42 years)

Average service at present school:
4.5 years (average)
(range, 1-31 years)

CURRENT POSITION HELD	
Teaching principal	79 (10%)
Deputy principal	58 (7%)
2nd Deputy	5 (6%)
Senior teacher - junior classes	50 (6%)
Other senior teacher	86 (11%)
Teacher	478 (61%)
Special class teacher	18 (2.6%)
Assessment class teacher	1
Regulation teacher	11 (1.8%)

Nature of appointment:	
Permanent	580 (73%)
Limited tenure	91 (12%)
Year 1	64 (8%)
Long-term relieving	54 (7%)

Obtained appointment:	
By application	669 (84%)
By placement	124 (15%)
By secondment	5 (1%)

Page 7 (Chapter 1)

CLASSROOM EXPERIENCE

Children in class or home base unit	27 (average)

Average age of child:

9 years
(range, 5-13)

Best description of design of where you teach:

Purpose-built, open plan/variable space	88 (11%)
Converted open plan/variable space	28 (3%)
Conventional classroom	624 (78%)
Other	54 (8%)

Organisation of teaching:

Team teaching	192 (25%)
Single-class teaching	587 (75%)

Children on school roll:

322 (average)
(range, 9-811)

Description of school roll:

Rising	147 (19%)
Stable	313 (40%)
Declining	328 (41%)

NB. **Percentages, where possible, have been rounded up to the nearest whole number. The number may not necessarily add up to 800, as some teachers failed to answer all of the questions.**

CHAPTER 2: CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF STRESS

A review of the literature

A useful approach to identifying the causes and consequences of stress in the teaching profession is to review the findings of some of the research that has been carried out, both in New Zealand and overseas. It is important to see these findings in the overall context of teaching, and to be wary of either over-emphasising the impact of stress on teachers, or of dismissing it as being such an inevitable part of teaching that it is not worth singling out as an issue.

In **Chapter 1**, we made the point that a stressful experience for some teachers may be for others a welcome challenge. It is therefore not possible to draw up a list of events that cause stress and say: *"Avoid these and you will reduce the stress of teaching"* (Ivancevich and Matteson, 1980). Moreover, teachers cannot simply *"avoid"* stress, as teaching is an occupation where most problems are sudden, unanticipated, and must be dealt with immediately.

The classroom, for example, is full of potential *"stressors"*, containing as it does, between 30 and 40 children, each with different expectations and problems and all clamouring for the teacher's attention.

A teacher spends more than a thousand hours a year in the classroom, establishing and maintaining control, meeting daily teaching requirements, dealing with the joys and disappointments as children succeed, fail, or don't seem to care about learning. In addition to all this, teachers often have to cope with poor equipment, overcrowding, extra duties and the constant feeling that no matter how much effort they put in, the result will not match up. Also, not a week goes by without the media featuring the comment of a parent, employer, MP, or Jill or Jack Bloggs on what should be taught, how it should be taught, and how teaching practices (never as good as they were *"when I was at school"*) are responsible for many of society's ills. Everyone, it seems, has the right to blame it on the education system. For some teachers, this constant flow of public criticism adds to the burden of stress they are already contending with.

Recent research in New Zealand by Coleman (1981) identifies four consistently stressful situations which teachers face. These are: pupil misbehaviour (the most stressful), poor working conditions, time pressures, and a poor school ethos. Galloway's research also identifies the children's behaviour as the primary cause of stress. Other causes include: teaching problems (e.g. planning was inadequate), children's progress (the children had difficulty in understanding), staff relationships (other staff members are difficult to work with), multiple roles (play-time supervisor also has responsibility for safety), and extra duties (collecting and checking money).

There may well be a relationship between different stressors, so that if one situation leads to feelings of emotional discomfort, the teacher becomes vulnerable to the emotional impact of other forms of stress. For example, are teachers more vulnerable on their duty day, when almost all of the day is spent with children? And, does this make them less able to deal effectively with problems of time (e.g. when the teacher has not had time to prepare lessons), leading to problems in the classroom, which in turn, have an emotional impact and thereby increase the teacher's stress?

Research findings in England tend to support those of Galloway and Coleman. This is not surprising, because the New Zealand researchers used the same or similar questionnaires. Therefore, the general findings from the English research are worth noting. Pratt (1978), for example, identified six sources of stress: *"relations, non-cooperative [sic] children, inadequate teaching, aggressive children, extra jobs, and concern for children's learning."* He describes teacher/child interaction as *"the most central and enduring source of stress to most teachers"* (1978:6).

Kyriacou and Sutcliffe (1978) studied a sample of 257 teachers from mixed comprehensive schools and identified four sources of stress: pupil behaviour (noisy pupils, difficult classes, poorly motivated pupils), poor working conditions (poor career structure, shortage of equipment, large classes), time pressures (too much paperwork, too many demands on after-school time, lack of time to spend with individual pupils), and poor school ethos (lack of effective consultation, inadequate school discipline).

In their conclusions, these authors make an important point that should not be overlooked: although it is possible to identify and describe different sources of teacher stress, each source is itself made up of a complex array of different events - each event contributing to the overall level of stress.

As teaching methods are conditioned by the teacher's personality, criticism of this area is likely to be taken personally, and can therefore be hurtful - becoming a further source of stress.

Table 2 illustrates many of the specific situations that cause a teacher's stress.

TABLE 2: SPECIFIC SITUATIONS WHICH CAUSE TEACHER STRESS

Author	Theoretical Background	Stressful Situations
Borland (1963)	An enquiry into matters of health, and conditions of employment of teachers in primary schools of New Zealand. Borland considered a number of areas of concern; and, as an example, I have included only those listed under the heading of *"aspects of teaching actually injurious to physical or mental health"*. Sample: 378 primary school teachers, all of which were members of the NZEI	In rank order: 1 Too many pupils in classes 2 Too much clerical work 3 Too many pupil problems 4 Too much preparation which has to be done outside school hours 5 The need to make too much teaching apparatus 6 Too many professional duties 7 Extra-curricular problems 8 Too much extra-curricular work 9 Interruptions in classroom 10 Worry over parental attitude 11 Staffing problems 12 Lack of breaks during day because intervals and lunch-time needed for school matters 13 Teaching of a large class, with wide range of pupils 14 Amount of time needed for marking pupils' work 15 School lacking a suitable person as janitor
Coverdale (1973)	An exploratory study of the problems teachers saw as affecting their morale	1 The system of inspection which destroys the professional self-image of teaching

	Sample: 165 experienced primary and secondary state school teachers throughout New South Wales	2 Promotion based primarily on seniority 3 The arbitrary system of transfers 4 Unmanageable class size, and inadequate amenities and equipment 5 The rigidity of the curriculum and the functionary role of teaching, aimed at getting as many children through the system as is practicable 6 Lack of prestige and professional recognition 7 The indifference of the parents
NZEI (1979)	In an investigation of absenteeism and low morale, a number of issues were isolated as influencing these behaviours Sample: 80 teachers from the Papatoetoe-Otara-Mangere area	1 Large schools and large classes 2 Lack of tenure and low salary 3 Lack of parental support, poor child-rearing patterns 4 The hierarchical organisation of schools 5 Lack of professional support 6 Problems with management of children
Roper (1979)	Although teachers recognise that some stress is inherent in the job, they believe that much is unnecessary, arising from inadequate resources and facilities, and unreasonable expectations and workloads Sample: The information was based on written and verbal perceptions of stress by New Zealand secondary school teachers	1 Necessary materials and equipment cannot be provided so the teacher has to *"make do"* 2 Teacher/pupil relationship: rather than demanding and challenging, this is often the greatest stress 3 Professional relationships: while for some teachers and principals professional relationships can be supportive as well as stressful, frequently because of work pressure there is insufficient time for professional consultation 4 Workload: many teachers find their workload excessive and resent the intrusion of lesson preparation, marking, and other school-related responsibilities into their evenings and weekends 5 Career opportunities: dissatisfaction with career opporunities because of the hierarchical structure of the service 6 Expectations and demands: these include social pressures

		to beat times a counsellor, administrator, human relations advisor, parent, vocational guidance source, and recreation leader 7 Personal expectations: stress often results from teachers failing to meet the high standards they impose on themselves
Coleman (1981)	Two research questions were asked: *"To what extent do teachers feel they are experiencing stress?"* and *"What do teachers feel are the main sources of stress?"* Sample: 67 primary school teachers in the Mangonui Branch of the NZEI	1 Pupil misbehaviour: this included, for example, pupils who constantly misbehaved, difficult classes, impolite behaviour, poorly motivated pupils, pupils who who a lack of interest; and the need to constantly monitor pupils' behaviour 2 Poor working conditions: this includes, for example, dislike of visits from inspectors, large classes, lack of professional backup, demands on after-school time, lack of participation in decision making and poor career structure 3 Time pressures: this includes, for example, insufficient time to spend with individual pupils, constant pupil demands, lack of time for further professional study, and a high administrative workload 4 Poor school ethos: this includes, for example, trying to maintain values and standards, lack of consensus on minimum standards, lack of effective consultation, attitudes and behaviour of some of the teachers
Galloway, et al. (1982)	In answering the question: *"What are the principal sources of stress reported by teachers?"*, the researchers used a stress inventory specifically focusing on events which occurred during the school day Sample: 269 primary school teachers in the North Island part of the	The 10 items with the highest stress ratings were: 1 There was at least one problem child in my class 2 Some children did not do as they were told straight away 3 I was not able to do enough with individual pupils 4 The children did not listen to what was said 5 A child did not do as I told him/her to 6 Children made a lot of noise

	Wellington Education Board	during this lesson/activity 7 Some children were hostile and aggressive towards each other 8 I was interrupted by other people/events 9 Children had difficulty in learning/understanding 10 The weather made the children restless
Panckhurst et al. (1982)	How do principals' experiences of stress differ from those of classroom teachers - principals rated the degree of stress associated with 63 different events Sample: 40 principals of state primary schools in the North Island part of the Wellington Education Board (Part of the Galloway research)	The items which scored the highest as sources of *"quite a lot"* or *"extreme"* stress were: 1 Management of school in wet weather 2 The fragmented, interrupted nature of the day 3 Own general workload 4 Competence of teachers 5 Conversion, remodelling of school buildings 6 Staff attitudes, values, behaviour 7 Purchase, maintenance of teaching equipment 8 Maintenance of school plant 9 Relieving staff policy, provision 10 Staffing restrictions (teachers)
Some English findings		
Pratt (1978)	The effects of age and background of children on reported feelings of stress Sample: 124 full-time primary school teachers	Stress arose from five main areas: 1 A general inability to cope with teaching problems 2 Non-cooperative [sic] children 3 Aggressive children 4 Concern for childrens' learning 5 Staff relationships From the Teacher/Event Stress Inventory, the 10 most stressful situations per person per week were: 1 The weather made the children restless 2 Children did not do as told 3 A child did not do as told 4 There was one difficult child 5 Children did not listen 6 Children had learning difficulties 7 I was interrupted 8 I couldn't reach the standard 9 Extra-curricular activity 10 A child defied me

Kyriacou and Sutcliffe (1978)	What do teachers feel are the main sources of stress Sample: 257 teachers from mixed comprehensive schools	The 10 situations which caused teachers the greatest amount of stress: 1 Pupils' poor attitudes to work 2 Trying to uphold and maintain values and standards 3 Poorly motivated pupils 4 Covering lessons for absent teachers 5 Too much work to do 6 Lack of time to spend with individual pupils 7 Individual pupils who continually misbehave 8 Pupils who show a lack of interest 9 Not enough time to do the work 10 Lack of time for marking
Kyriacou and Sutcliffe (1979)	The association between self-reported teacher stress and job satisfaction absenteeism, and intention to leave teaching Sample: 218 full-time teachers, exclusive of deputy principals and principals	Fourteen sources of stress were chosen as representing the main sources of teachers' stress. In order of stressfulness, these are: 1 Trying to uphold/maintain values and standards 2 Pupils' poor attitudes to work 3 Individual pupils who continually misbehave 4 Too much work to do 5 Lack of time to spend with individual pupils 6 Noisy pupils 7 Inadequate disciplinary policy of school 8 Difficult classes 9 Lack of time for marking 10 Lack of consensus on minimum standards 11 Covering lessons for absent teachers 12 Administrative work 13 Inadequate salary 14 Poor career structure

Emotional impact of teaching

Many teachers readily admit they experience emotional discomfort and fatigue. After the first week of teaching, a year-one teacher wrote in her diary, *"I had a good bawl on Saturday night because I felt I was so hopeless last week"* (Battersby, 1982:3). In response to a survey question, a teacher remarked, *"There are some days you go home and you feel washed out. You almost feel you'd be better if you were tired out physically"* (Panckhurst, 1982:7).

Teachers who took part in the research project describe the emotional impact of teaching in these ways:

- *"You get tired - emotionally and physically."*
- *"You become irritated, touchy, upset and angry at little things."*

-- *"You feel mentally and physically drained."*
-- *"You get anxious because the days don't seem long enough."*
-- *"You get uptight, tense, can't switch off."*
-- *"You can't sleep properly.*

In the Galloway research, one teacher in eight described teaching as either very or extremely stressful. Moreover, as Galloway points out, this ratio may be understated. Teachers may be reluctant to say they are experiencing stress, feeling this may amount to an admission of personal failure to *"stay on top of things"*, and may also penalise their chances of promotion.

Are specific types of stress linked with particular emotional or physical responses? In reviewing the published research, it is often difficult to establish such links. Each situation is usually rated as being somewhere between *"not at all stressful"* to *"extremely stressful"*, with no indication of the physical symptoms or emotional response the situation generates. In other research, the physical consequences of the situation are defined. A very stressful event, for example is said to cause a *"highly emotional response, perhaps accompanied by perspiration, high temperature or palpitations"* (Pratt, 1978). This also tends to be unsatisfactory, as a respondent who experiences only some of these symptoms in a stressful situation will be confused as to how to rate it.

Kyriacou and Sutcliffe (1978) asked, *"In general, how stressful do you find being a teacher?"* The more stressful teaching was, the more likely it was to be related to *"stress symptoms"* such as frustration, tension, exhaustion, anxiety and depression - with exhaustion and frustration the most common symptoms. Their research did not, however, relate these responses to specific teaching situations.

These problems aside, the general impression from much of the research is that many teachers see some connection between stressful situations and ill health and malaise - although which is the cause and which is the effect is often difficult to determine.

Some researchers have shown it is possible to relate specific stresses to specific situations. Job dissatisfaction, for example, appears (not unexpectedly) to be related to poor career structure, inadequate salary, difficult classes, individual pupils who continually misbehave, noisy pupils and inadequate disciplinary policy of school (Kyriacou and Sutcliffe, 1979). The same authors related the intention to leave teaching to poor career structure and inadequate salaries. The number of days taken off because of ill health was related to too much work to do, poor career structure, lack of time spent with individual pupils and pupils' poor attitudes to work.

It is interesting to speculate on whether persistent feeling of not getting across to the children may become so discouraging that it leads to a willingness to take more time off, even for minor ailments.

In Galloway's research, 26 per cent of readers indicated that they lacked the vitality necessary for classroom demands or that their energy was, at times, barely adequate to cope with extra strain.

Research by Pratt (1978) suggests that the home background of children has a major influence on the levels of stress experienced by teachers. For example, teachers working in schools in areas where there are large numbers of *"financially deprived homes"* were more likely to report non-cooperation and aggression from the children, and thus more stress. These teachers were also more likely to report feelings of inadequacy (not being able to teach to their own satisfaction or to cope with various teaching problems) and concern for the

In concluding this review, two points in particular are worth keeping in mind. The first is that teachers do not all experience the same level and same sort of stress. The Galloway research, for example, found that younger, less experienced teachers reported more stress from children's behaviour, parent interviews, teaching reading, and class trips. Older teachers, on the other hand, reported more stress from the multiple roles they were expected to undertake. Men reported more stress from inspectors' visits than did women, and open plan teaching generally resulted in fewer stresses than conventional classroom arrangements.

The second point is that, although teaching produces many stressful situations, it should not be forgotten that the very situations which produce the stress can, through providing a challenge, produce enormous satisfaction at other times. Many, if not all, jobs seem to have this duality, which is sometimes expressed in terms of the job's ability to be either a *"support"* or a *"demand"*. It is therefore important to see the research findings discussed in this chapter in the overall context of teaching, and to avoid either over-emphasising teacher stress or dismissing it by suggesting there is no case to offer.

CHAPTER 3: FINDINGS ON CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF STRESS

The research project, commissioned by the NZEI, set out to identify situations that New Zealand primary school teachers perceive as stressful, and to consider the effects of the stress which such situations induce.

Stage I: interviews

As a first step, Stage I (the interview stage) was carried out. This involved asking teachers a number of questions about the pressures they experienced. The first question was, *"Is there much pressure in your work?"* Most respondents acknowledged they experienced some pressure, although 30 per cent thought that teaching was *"not especially stressful"* or that *"the level of pressure depended on the staff, headmaster and kids, the sort of person you were, and the fact that there were 'self-imposed' pressures"* or that *"pressure varied from school to school"*.

What events cause pressure?

This question led to a more specific question about what events caused the pressure. A *"critical incident"* question was used - interviewees were asked to think of a time when they had felt under pressure and to describe the sort of things that caused that pressure. From the 138 teachers who were able to recall different pressures, 300 events were recorded. The similarity of some of the responses allowed the events to be grouped under seven headings. These were: social relationships with children, work overload, administrative difficulties, pressures from parents, work conflict, lack of support, and home-school pressures. **Table 3**, below, sets out these seven groups and the individual items which make up each of them.

TABLE 3: RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION - "WHAT SORTS OF THINGS CAUSE PRESSURE?"

Social relationships with children (37%):

Children who are disruptive and difficult to handle	Academic and behavioural problems of children; fights, noise, yelling, stupid reactions from children; children coming from unstable homes; forthright children; children who do not relate well to others or to the teacher; the fear of disobedience from the children; difficulties in controlling the class.
Children who are difficult to motivate	Children who do not appreciate your efforts; the low standard of class work; children who fail to listen to instructions; children who don't respect their own property; children whose attitudes to school and learning become increasingly negative.
The physical demands of teaching	Number of children in the class; children always demanding attention - won't let up; isolation with children all the time; keeping the children occupied; children clinging to you; a new child in the class takes up more time.
Constant contact with children	Duty hours give no break from children; can't get away from the school and teaching; have to go from

	situation to situation without a break.
Concern as to whether you are doing enough for children	Wondering whether you are doing the right thing for the children; no time to deal with children with special needs; thinging you could do more with a child; pressure to achieve same standards with all children; being forced to grade children on a 1-5 scale; pressure to be innovative.

Work overload (20%):

Having to do or deal with many things	Reports, records, returns, sports events, outings, etc.; having to do a lot of things other than teaching; too many things to do in a given time; many things cropping up at once; meeting deadlines; pressure building up towards the end of term; dealing with 35 children, plus parents, colleagues and senior staff.
Continual feeling of things to do	Pressure to get syllabus covered - changing, irrelevant or increasing workload; feel you could spend 24 hours a day teaching - not being able to leave it; haven't enough time to do all the preparation work; doing two full-time jobs - administering and teaching; all based on the timetable - pressure of the clock; feel there are things to do but not time; work overload - need for relieving teachers.

Administrative difficulties (12%):

Administrative problems imposed by colleagues	Administrative pressures from principal and deputy; school programme not very well planned; little feedback on quality of performance; poor communication; incompetence of the principal; one-way communication - downwards; no school rules - discipline problem; lack of authority in school.
Promotion - career structure	Grading system - someone (inspector) assigning a mark to you; lack of security of employment; not well paid; lack of opportunities for advancement; training college inadequately prepares you for teaching.
Lack of resources	Lack of funds for equipment; inadequate equipment and resources; crowded staffroom; being left with children when other teachers away.

Pressure from parents (12%):

Expectations of parents	Parents' expectations of their children's learning too high; parents expect teachers to discipline children; can see what parents want but can't achieve it; teachers becoming more than teachers - overcoming children's personal problems.
Lack of support from parents	Parents who will not cooperate - will not give children what they need; lack of interest from parents; lack of parental support; inconsiderate parents; outside pressures from parents - society

	at large; changing community - social changes, behavioural changes of kids.
Work conflict (11%):	
Conflict with colleagues and school	Need compatible staff - friction between staff, particularly in syndicate; poor inter-staff communications; conforming to other teachers' and the school's expectations of you; in open plan, other teachers interfering with handling of children; over-demanding staff members; unreasonable demands by head teacher; inadequate standards of teaching apparent; principal and other senior staff put pressure on you; pressure from senior staff on how to run a class.
Career conflicts	Being expected to put career first and family second; doubts as to whether you are suited to teaching after all; no one to grade yourself against; required to do work by senior staff which you feel you can't do.
Lack of support (6%):	
Little support from colleagues	Lack of support from colleagues and senior staff; public criticism of staff by staff; no support from staff for new methods; attitudes of staff - few seem willing to help children; other staff members watching you all the time; other teachers not doing their jobs properly; other staff not pulling their weight; little appreciation shown by anyone.
Home-school pressures (2%):	
The interaction between home and school	The interaction between home and workload problems; too tired to do many things you want to do away from school; pressures from home as well; little recognition of the fact that there are a variety of things to do outside of school as well.

In Chapter 2, we noted that education is an area where almost everybody believes they have a right to criticise, and that this can be a source of stress for teachers. It follows, of course, that if teachers have to deal with the expressed wishes of many different groups in society, they are continually faced with the need to evaluate and reconcile their role - not only in terms of classroom routines but also in terms of what society expects of them and the profession they practise.

It seemed relevant, therefore, to ask the teachers we interviewed, *"What do you think society expects of school teachers?"* Again, the responses were many and varied. They could be divided into five broad categories.

The first three concerned the role of the teacher. Respondents' typical comments included:

-- *"Teach the child discipline and control."*
-- *"Teach health, moral and physical welfare."*
-- *"Assume full parental role."*
-- *"Teachers are seen as nothing more than society's babysitters"*.

Respondents also felt that teachers were held responsible for society's problems:

- -- *"Teachers are expected to solve all society's problems."*
- -- *"Teachers are expected to mould new generations."*
- -- *"Teachers are made the scapegoat for society's ills"*.

Further, respondents felt that teachers were expected to maintain at all times a high standard of behaviour:

- -- *"Teachers are expected to be prim and proper."*
- -- *"Teachers are expected to be upright members of the community."*
- -- *"Teachers are expected to be an example for children to follow."*
- -- *"Parents have a higher expectation of teachers than they do of other people."*

The other two categories were more specifically concerned with the expectations of parents. They included problems related to what, in the teacher's view, were unreasonable beliefs in a child's ability:

- -- *"Teachers are expected to work miracles with the child, both academically and behaviourally."*
- -- *"Parents don't seem to be aware that there are other children in the class"*.

Further, parents expect a lot and give little support:

- -- *"Parents leave everything to the teacher."*
- -- *"Parents expect higher standards at school than at home."*
- -- *"Parents have a narrow view of education - few are sympathetic to what teachers have to do and what teachers have to put up with"*.

Interestingly enough, a third of the respondents thought such expectations were reasonable, although their agreement was reserved. For example, they thought the expectations were reasonable *"to a certain extent"*, or were reasonable only if parents were supportive.

Stage II: main survey

The information collected in the interview stage was used to develop a teacher's checklist of potentially stressful situations. It was possible to identify 69 different situations dissimilar enough to include in this checklist (**Appendix I**).

Teachers who took part in the main survey were asked to consider each situation and to indicate how frequently it occurred for them. Responses were measured on a five-point scale, ranging from *"never"* to *"frequently"*. Having considered how frequently the situation occurred, respondents then rated it in terms of the anxiety it created and how tired it left them. Scoring was again on a five-point scale, ranging from *"not at all anxious"* to *"extremely anxious"*, and *"not at all tiring"* to *"extremely tiring"*.

The first stage in the analysis of this information was concerned with determining whether groups of situations tended to occur with the same frequency, or produce the same amount of anxiety or tiredness. The results suggested that six different categories of stressful situations occurred. These are set out in **Tables 4 to 9**, in order of their relative frequency, and are discussed below.

TABLE 4: SITUATION I - WORK OVERLOAD

The most frequently occuring stressful situation stemmed from **work overload,** and included:

- Too many things to do in a given time, e.g. reports, returns, etc.
- Demands on after-school time.
- Having to do lots of things other than teaching (organise outings, collect money, etc.).
- Having to give more time and financial commitment to extra-curricular and related school activities.
- Not having enough time to prepare for lessons.
- Pressure to get the syllabus covered.
- Lack of recognition for extra duties performed.

TABLE 5: SITUATION II - EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS AND OTHERS

The **expectations of parents** was the situation that came second in terms of stress frequency, and included:

- Parents who expect a teacher to work miracles with their child.
- Parents who expect you to give everything to their child and who are not aware of the rest of the class.
- Parents who blame teachers for their own mistakes.
- Parents who expect that teachers can solve all society's problems.
- Parents whose expectations of their child's learning ability is too high.
- Parents who think teachers ought to be like teachers they had many years ago.
- Parents who expect they have a right to come and see you at any time.
- Being accountable to many different groups of people.
- The feeling that teachers are required to maintain a high standard of behaviour both inside and outside of work.
- The feeling that few people are aware of what teachers actually do and put up with.
- The feeling that parents have a low opinion of teachers - low status.

TABLE 6: SITUATION III - RELATIONSHIPS IN THE CLASSROOM

The third most frequently occurring stressful situation covered **relationships in the classroom,** including:

- Feeling that you are not getting across to the children.
- Difficulties in handling children who misbehave.
- Children fighting or arguing with each other.
- Children not accepting your authority.
- Children who are just not interested - unresponsive or poorly motivated.
- Children who do not listen to instructions.
- The noise level of the children.
- Children who always demand attention - won't let up.
- Children who do not appreciate the effort you are making.
- Children using foul language or being impolite.
- Keeping the children occupied.
- Having to deal with jealousy between children.
- Children being very forthright - speaking their mind.

TABLE 7: SITUATION IV - UNSUPPORTIVE PARENTS AND DIFFICULT CHILDREN

The fourth situation concerned **unsupportive parents and difficult children**, including:

- Parents who are just not enthusiastic about their children's education.
- Parents who will not give their children the help that they need.
- Damage to the classroom or school.
- Theft of teaching equipment.
- Having to deal with children's health, moral and physical welfare.
- Continually having to deal with pupils' lateness or truancy.
- Having to teach children social values and skills.
- Children using foul language or being impolite.

TABLE 8: SITUATION V - PHYSICAL DEMANDS OF TEACHING

The fifth situation involved the **physical demands of teaching**, including:

- Poor school facilities (e.g. overcrowded classrooms, lack of hygiene, etc.).
- Overcrowding in the classroom.
- Being with children for long periods of time without a break.
- Keeping the children occupied.
- Children clinging to you - physical pressure.

TABLE 9: SITUATION VI - LITTLE INDIVIDUAL CONTROL OVER DIFFERENT SCHOOL EVENTS

The sixth situation stemmed from the feeling that teachers have **little individual control over different school events**, including:

- Following directives you disagree with - from the head or other teachers.
- Lack of support from colleagues and senior staff.
- Lack of any participation in decision making.
- Poor school organisation.
- Lack of any effective consultation.
- Pressure from senior teachers as to how you should run your class.
- Other teachers interfering with the way you are dealing with the children.
- Tensions in the staffroom.
- Little feedback on the quality of your teaching.
- Trying to conform to other teachers' and the school's expectations of you.
- Not being adequately supported for curriculum change.
- Unrealistic syllabus requirements for the children you teach.
- Inadequate equipment and resources.

When considering each of the six situations, it is important to bear in mind the following points:

The first is that this stage of research focused on identifying environmental events which cause teachers stress. That is, those stressors which result from the different roles which the teacher has to assume during school time and, to a certain extent, away from school. No attempt was made to investigate whether personal attributes may make some teachers more vulnerable than others to these stressful situations. The emphasis has simply been on identifying those events which confront teachers when performing their professional duties, and assessing the level of anxiety and tiredness associated with those events.

Secondly, each of the six situations should be viewed as a complex amalgam of similar events. For example, although the third stressful situation has been broadly described as *"relationships in the classroom"*, it has at least three aspects: disruptive children, demanding children, and poorly motivated children. I use this situation as an example because often research into causes of teachers' stress has focused solely on the disruptive child. The situation is, however, more complex and includes other aspects of pupil behaviour. While disruptive children may be a source of stress for some teachers, the demands of some children and the continual need to motivate others, all contribute to classroom stress.

It is also important to bear in mind that the six different situations described above are probably not independent of each other. A situation of work overload, for example, may make some teachers more vulnerable to other sources of stress. When teachers perceive that parents are not giving their children the support they need, does this add to the stress a teacher may experience in trying to motivate the child? There is a pattern among stressful events, and we should not overlook the probability that one situation leads to another.

You may now like to see how frequently each of the six different situations occurs for you. By turning to **Appendix II**, you will be able to score yourself on each of them. The higher your score for any of the situations, the more frequent its occurrence. You should be aware not only of your overall score for each situation, but also the way in which your scores are made up. Look at the pattern of your score for each of the six situations and see which events are most critical for you. When these events occur, they tend to lead to others, thus pushing up your overall score.

Jot down your overall scores for all the six situations. Have a look at your high scores and see whether you can identify any relationship between the events they represent. Is one stressful situation making you more vulnerable to another?

Once you can identify those events which cause you most stress, you will be in a better position to work out strategies for handling them. A wide range of these strategies is discussed in **Chapter 5**.

The next part of the survey involved finding out the levels of anxiety and tiredness associated with each situation. Anxiety and tiredness scores were calculated for each of the six situations, and then each was ranked in order of how much anxiety it generated. These rankings were then compared with the frequency with which each situation occurred. The results are set out in **Table 10**.

The situation producing the most anxiety and tiredness is the same one that occurs most frequently - **work overload**. For many teachers, the pressure of having to get the syllabus covered and to do lots of things other than teaching, causes anxiety and tiredness.

However, anxiety and tiredness are not always related to the frequency with which a situation occurs **(Table 10)**. Having to deal with unsupportive parents and difficult children may not, for example, be a frequent situation, but when it did occur, it ranked second in the amount of anxiety it produced. Similarly, many teachers found the physical demands of teaching (poor school facilities, overcrowding, being with children for long periods of time), were likely to cause tiredness and, at times, exhaustion.

TABLE 10: A COMPARISON (BY RANK ORDER) OF THE FREQUENCY, ANXIETY, AND TIREDNESS LEVELS GENERATED BY THE SIX SITUATIONS

		Rank Order	
	Frequency	Anxiety	Tiredness
Work overload	1	1	1
Expectations of parents	2	4	5
Relationships in the classroom	3	5	3
Unsupportive parents & difficult children	4	2	4
Physical demands of teaching	5	6	2
Little individual control over different school events	6	3	6

Are the rankings different when we divide the sample into men and women? The results **(Table 11)** indicate that women teachers encounter classroom issues (e.g. not getting across to the children, children fighting, children not listening) more frequently than male teachers do, but do not however experience more anxiety and tiredness because of this. **Table 11** shows men and women produce identical rankings for the anxiety and tiredness associated with classroom relationships. Both sexes found work overload was the most frequently occurring situation, and in general, it produced higher levels of anxiety and tiredness.

Two other differences are worth mentioning. Men appear to associate higher levels of anxiety with having little individual control over different school events. (It is interesting to speculate on whether men are more affected by *"career issues"* and consequently become more anxious when they perceive that certain events, which may affect their professonal advancement, are outside their control.)

Women found that unsupportive parents and difficult children caused them the most anxiety. Note that for both men and women, the situations that caused high levels of anxiety were not necessarily those that occurred frequently. An interesting finding, and one not immediately obvious, is that, in comparison with men's scores, women averaged higher levels of anxiety and tiredness from all the six situations **(Table 11)**.

TABLE 11: A COMPARISON (BY RANK ORDER) FOR MEN AND WOMEN TEACHERS, OF THE FREQUENCY, ANXIETY, AND TIREDNESS LEVELS GENERATED BY THE SIX SITUATIONS

			Rank Order			
	Frequency		Anxiety		Tiredness	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Work overload	1	1	1	2	1	1
Expectations of parents	2	3	3	4	4	5
Unsupportive parents & difficult children	3	4	4	1	6	4
Relationships in the classroom	4	2	5	5	3	3
Physical demands of teaching	5	5	6	6	2	2
Little individual control over different school events	6	6	2	3	5	6

It is difficult to account for this finding, other than to speculate on whether women teachers become more involved and concerned about some of the issues which currently confront the profession.

One other comparison was made. The rankings of the different situations and their effects were investigated in terms of how much experience teachers had accumulated. The sample was divided into two groups - those with less than three years of certificated service and those beyond their third year of certificated service.

The results are set out in **Table 12**. In general, very few differences in rankings emerged. Work overload was again the most frequently occurring situation and the one ranked highest as a cause of anxiety and tiredness.

Both groups ranked *"dealing with unsupportive parents and difficult children"* as causing high levels of anxiety. However, years of experience did not generally seem to have a great influence on the frequency with which the different situations occurred or the levels of anxiety and tiredness they produced. The research did not investigate the possibility that the male/female differences noted above may have been related to length of teaching experience.

TABLE 12: A COMPARISON (BY RANK ORDER) - FOR MORE AND LESS EXPERIENCED TEACHERS - OF THE FREQUENCY, ANXIETY, AND TIREDNESS LEVELS GENERATED BY THE SIX SITUATIONS

a = Less than 3 years' certificated service
b = Beyond 3 years' certificated service

	Rank Order					
	Frequency		Anxiety		Tiredness	
	a	b	a	b	a	b
Work overload	1	1	2	1	1	1
Relationships in the classroom	2	3	5	6	2	3
Expectations of parents	3	2	3	4	5	5
Unsupportive parents & difficult children	4	4	1	2	3	6
Little individual control over different school events	5	6	4	3	6	4
Physical demands of teaching	6	5	6	5	4	2

All these comparisons have of course been made on the basis of scores averaged across situations, and may therefore hide the frequency and impact of a particular situation. For this reason, each of the 69 situations was considered in terms of frequency and of anxiety and tiredness. It was then possible to determine the 10 most frequently occurring situations, the 10 most likely to cause anxiety, and the 10 situations most likely to cause tiredness. It was also possible to compare the different situations to see whether the frequently occurring situations were those causing all the anxiety and tiredness. The results, set out in **Tables 13 to 15**, are interesting.

As expected, the type of situation which causes anxiety is not necessarily the same as that which causes tiredness, and neither are completely dependent on the frequency with which the situation occurs.

Table 13 shows that two of the most frequently occurring situations (having to teach children social values and skills, and having to deal with children's health, moral and physical welfare) do not rank amongst those causing the most anxiety or tiredness. This could be accounted for by the fact that most teachers now accept these as part of their normal teaching duties and just get on and teach them. It is also likely that any anxiety or exhaustion created depends on how comfortable each teacher feels with teaching these topics. Therefore, while the situations may be stressful for individual teachers, they may not be stressful for a large number of teachers.

TABLE 13: THE 10 MOST FREQUENTLY OCCURRING SITUATIONS

		In Rank Order Percentage *
1	The feeling that few people are aware of what teachers actually do and put up with	58
2	Children who do not listen to instructions	50
3 ++	Having to teach children social values and skills	48
4	Having to do lots of things other than teaching (organise outings, collect money, etc.)	47
5	Too many things to do in a given time (reports, records, returns, etc.)	45
6	Feeling that you could do more for the children	44
7	Lack of in-service training opportunities	42
8 ++	Having to deal with children's health, moral and physical welfare	38
9	Not having enough time to prepare for lessons	37
10	The demands on after-school time	36

* Percentage of teachers who rated the situation as occuring most frequently.

++ Occur frequently but not rated as causing anxiety or tiredness. All the other situations were rated as causing either anxiety, exhaustion or both.

The interesting point about **Tables 14 and 15** is that the situations which result in anxiety are substantively different from those which result in tiredness. Anxiety and tiredness are not necessarily the result of frequently occurring situations. Being graded by inspectors, for example, may not occur frequently, but when it does, it causes considerable anxiety and tiredness for many. Similarly - demanding children, overcrowded and noisy classrooms are, when they occur, particularly wearying experiences.

The results also show that tiredness and anxiety are probably related, in the sense that working late because you do not have enough time during the working day to prepare for lessons may cause tiredness, but if you are unprepared, or if you were too tired to prepare adequately, this may also contribute to feelings of anxiety.

TABLE 14: THE 10 SITUATIONS MOST LIKELY TO CAUSE ANXIETY

		In Rank Order Percentage *
1	Being graded by inspectors	61
2	Insecurity of tenure	57
3 ++	Too many things to do in a given time (reports, records, returns, etc.)	46

4	Poor promotional opportunities in teaching	43
5 +	Feeling that you could do more for the children	42
6 ++	Not having enough time to prepare for lessons	41
7 +	Feeling that few people are aware of what teachers actually do and put up with	40
8	Parents who will not give children the help they need	37
9 +	Lack of in-service training opportunities	36
10	Pressure to get the syllabus covered	35

* Percentage of teachers who reported that situations made them particularly anxious.

+ Situations which occur frequently.

++ Situations which occur frequently and also cause tiredness.

TABLE 15: THE 10 SITUATIONS MOST LIKELY TO CAUSE TIREDNESS

		In Rank Order Percentage *
1 +++	Being graded by inspectors	65
2 ++	Too many things to do in a given time (reports, records, returns, etc.)	62
3	Being with children for long periods of time without a break	53
4 +	Children who do not listen to instructions	52
5 ++	Not having enough time to prepare for lessons	51
6 +	Demands on after-school time	48
7	Noise level of the children	47
8	Children who always demand attention - won't let up	45
9	Overcrowding in the classroom	44
10 +	Having to do lots of things other than teaching (organise outings, collect money, etc.)	43

* Percentage of teachers who reported that situations made them particularly tired.

+ Situations which occur frequently.

++ Situations which occur frequently and also cause anxiety.

+++ Situations which, while not occurring frequently, cause anxiety.

CHAPTER 4. BURNOUT

Over the last few years, considerable attention has been focused on *"burnout"* and its impact on the teaching profession. Not only are there almost as many definitions of burnout as there are articles, but burnout itself seems to be related to a wide range of feelings associated with many different causes. It is frequently, and wrongly, used interchangeably with the term *"stress"*. Burnout is, however, a concept that deserves some attention. To begin with, it is important to realise that burnout is both a *"syndrome"* and a *"process"* (Mandaglio, 1982). In other words, we have the **state** of burnout (i.e. emotional and physical exhaustion) and the burnout **process** (i.e. the stages leading to this state). When people talk about burnout as emotional and physical exhaustion, they are talking about the final stage in what can be described as *"a process of disillusionment"*.

The state of burnout

Many symptoms have been associated with this condition. The range is diverse, and includes: headaches and colds, negative thinking, and an inability to control one's emotions. Recent reviews of the literature suggest, however, that there are three key aspects. These are described by Maslach and Jackson (1981) as emotional and physical exhaustion, depersonalisation (the development of negative and, to some extent, hardened attitudes and feelings), and a perceived lack of personal accomplishment. People experiencing these symptoms generally feel they are performing their job by merely going through the motions, or becoming locked into a job routine.

The process of burnout

If the state of burnout is characterised by a depletion in our emotional and physical resources, what are the various stages which lead to this? Perhaps we should begin by thinking of burnout in terms of a clock winding down - achievement or activity is in ever-decreasing circles, leading to complete inactivity as an escape from the pressures. MacBride (1983) identifies six stages in this process:

1. A gradual loss in job satisfaction
2. A rash of minor medical ailments
3. Interference with job performance and morale
4. A gradual loss of confidence in job performance and diminished self-esteem
5. Worries about stages 3 and 4 lead to further increases in physical and emotional symptoms
6. Downward spiral of deteriorating performance and productivity, accompanied by increasing depression - leading to complete apathy

Apathy here means the inability to mobilise internal resources to meet external demands. MacBride warns, however, that many of the early symptoms could also be indications of other physical disorders and should be dealt with as they occur. If they are ignored, they will contribute to the *"winding down"* towards burnout.

Edelwich (1980) refers to burnout as a progressive loss of idealism, energy and purpose. He explains this by taking as a starting point, a stage in a person's career which he terms **enthusiasm**. This is when the person has high hopes and great expectations of the job. When reality intervenes, the person has to modify these expectations; and when this happens, a second stage, **stagnation**, sets in. The person no longer does the job as if it were *"everything"*. The emphasis begins to shift towards meeting one's own needs rather than the needs of the job; and thus, the third stage, **frustration**, is approached. At this stage, the limitations associated with the job reduce not only the satisfaction of doing it but also make the job seem pointless. The final stage is reached when **apathy** sets in. The job is perceived as nothing more than a set of routines to be carried out.

The job characteristics that contribute to burnout appear to be many and varied. Formalised rules and procedures, lack of autonomy, lack of positive feedback, and lack of staff support have all been listed as possible causes. Yet rather than focus on each of these in turn, it is perhaps more appropriate to focus on two general conditions that seem to be clearly associated with burnout:

-- responsibility without authority, and
-- lack of control.

The first refers to those situations where a person is responsible for making the system work, while at the same time has little authority to change or influence it (MacBride, 1983). Lack of control refers to those situations where a person has to meet ever-increasing demands on their time, with little opportunity to control the number of demands or the frequency with which they occur. Thus, as MacBride suggests, the combination of:

1) one or both of these conditions, and
2) the demands of the classroom and the interaction between home and work, is likely to make a person very vulnerable to burnout.

Recognising burnout

Although burnout was not measured in this project, it is possible to make some interesting comparisons between the two general conditions outlined above and the research findings. Note, for example, the correspondence between *"responsibility without authority"* and *"lack of control"* and the fact that many teachers found stressful those situations where they had little control over individual school events. Although a stressed teacher does not necessarily become a burnt-out teacher, the important point is that the longer a teacher has to work under constant stress, and the fewer resources s/he has to cope, the more likely that teacher is to experience burnout.

If burnout is defined as mental and physical exhaustion, then some of the respondents to the questionnaire indicated that colleagues may well have reached that stage. One respondent referred to *"an increasingly obvious slowdown in enthusiasm for the work of teachers who left very soon after 3pm and arrived just on 8.45am"*. The respondent explained this was *"a stand by teachers not to do extras - plainly showing that teaching is just a job like any other job and that they do not wish to give of themselves"*.

Another teacher, who enjoyed teaching, described how she felt every Sunday:

-- *"Each Sunday night I rarely slept. In no way did I dread my work, but what was happening showed that there must be some underlying apprehension. In fact, I was suffering from nervous exhaustion."*

Other respondents were more terse:

-- *"Some teachers live for teaching - I teach for a living"*
-- *"Too many senior teachers, with no enthusiasm, are sitting in jobs"*.

Another aspect of the state of burnout is dissatisfaction with what you can accomplish. A number of teachers' comments expressed that feeling. One said,

-- *"I feel that over the past two years, there has been a dramatic down-*

> *swing in teachers' morale. There is a definite negativeness and pessimism towards career opportunities and being able to achieve something constructive for the children they teach".*

Another teacher was concerned with a lack of adequate promotion:

> -- *"Length of service seems to be the major dictator in job allocation, thus creating the delusion that the longer one teaches, the better one is".*

Others were strongly critical: *"... general and widespread lack of work satisfaction among school teachers. Too many do it because they couldn't think of anything else and now feel trapped in it."*

The rewards of teaching may be hard to come by. As one teacher said, *"You never get a 'Well done, you are doing a good job' or 'That's a successful unit you have taken'."* Even so, it is important not to overstate the presence of burnout among teachers or to argue that its sole cause resides in the job. Some of the responsibility rests with the teacher and involves not only recognising stressful situations but also being aware of one's own feelings and emotions. The following self-awareness exercise (Sobel, 1982) may be useful in this respect.

Self-awareness exercise

Consider your first class next Monday morning. Are you looking forward eagerly to that period - or do you dread going to school? Sobel recommends that on a scale of 0 (dread) to 10 (looking forward), consider 7 a barely passing score.

"A job is a job is a job." Is this your attitude towards teaching? If so, score 0.

What is your position in the staffroom? Do you constantly complain about your students - or do you (at least occasionally) brag about their accomplishments? The scale from complaints to cheers is 0 to 10.

Do you enjoy being with young people? If not always, then do you enjoy their company at least most of the time? Never = 0, always = 10.

How do you feel about the prospect of doing the same thing in the same place, year after year? Do you look forward to teaching young people until retirement? Select a number from 0 through 10.

Does your lesson plan call for the same routine every day? (0) Or do you search for new procedures to use in your daily teaching? (10)

Scores can range from 0 to 60, and Sobel suggests that any score below 40 indicates that burnout is a distinct possibility.

Another means of coping with burnout requires teachers to recognise that they are only responsible for how they **respond** to a crisis and not for all the other factors which **cause** burnout. An exercise (suggested by Hendrickson, 1979) that might be helpful is to keep a daily journal in which you record all your good and bad experiences.

Then evaluate these experiences on a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 equals disaster, 5 okay, and 10 wonderful. This record will help you *"keep in touch with your feelings"*, and because it should be possible to separate *"within"* from *"outside"* pressures, you will not be able to keep fooling yourself into always taking the blame. If you haven't time to complete this exercise every day, just note one good thing that happened at school each day. This will help you focus on a positive aspect. (Even if you can't think of one, you can always record the fact that you survived the day and haven't murdered any of the children!)

Reed (1979) offers principals ideas for preventing burnout among their staff. His suggestions include: getting staff to determine whether they feel they are using their potential, enjoying their career and valuing productive work; building self-esteem by giving positive reinforcement; involving teachers in decision making; communicating with members of staff; pushing for professional growth; actively involving parents; and promoting a school environment where the importance of physical and mental well-being are acknowledged.

It is worth emphasising a few key points before concluding this chapter. Burnout and stress are not the same. Burnout is physical and mental exhaustion. It is not the result of stress as such, but more the result of continual stress in situations where you have few coping strategies available to help you meet demands you find excessive. A stressed teacher does not automatically become a burnt-out teacher. Indeed, we must not forget that a certain amount of stress may be necessary in order to meet the challenges of a situation. Burnout does not happen overnight. It is a gradual process. Burnout is not inevitable in the teaching profession. It is not confined to over-achievers.

As both individual and organisational characteristics contribute to burnout, a positive step could be for schools to develop an appropriate climate to support teachers, and also for teachers as individuals to become more aware of their own reactions to stressful situations and to learn to handle the feelings that follow.

It is also important, as MacBride (1983) suggests, to keep reminding ourselves that we do not have to sacrifice our physical or emotional well-being simply to prove our productivity or dedication to the job.

Teachers' satisfactions

Perhaps after discussing burnout, it is appropriate to end the chapter by looking at the other side of the coin - at events which give teachers satisfaction. As mentioned at the end of the previous chapter, teaching is a job in which each aspect can be a support or a demand, depending on the circumstances. When the demands outweigh the supports, symptoms of stress are likely to appear. **Table 16** contains a representative selection of answers which teachers at the interview stage of the research gave to the question: *"Thinking about this year in school, what are the satisfying things about teaching?"* The responses show that relationships with children, staff, parents, and so on - at times the very sources of stress and fatique - are at other times the source of enormous satisfaction.

TABLE 16: RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION - "THINKING ABOUT THIS YEAR IN SCHOOL, WHAT ARE THE SATISFYING THINGS ABOUT TEACHING?"

The children (43%):	Companionship with the children; helping the children to achieve, develop and progress; seeing changes as children grow socially and emotionally; getting through to children; experiencing their enthusiasm and spontaneity; seeing them become involved in learning; establishing a good class spirit and cooperation; improving classroom relationships and developing a class cohesiveness;

	relaxing and getting to know children; providing stability for the children; seeing children grow from strangers to friends.
The staff (24%):	Developing supportive relationships with staff; working with and establishing friendships with staff; the opportunity to counsel and help teachers deal with teaching difficulties; taking part in staff social activities.
Cooperation from parents (15%):	Complimentary remarks from parents; getting to know parents; parent and child participation; working with parents; gratitude from parents and children.
Extrinsic rewards (12%):	Promotion; the hours of work; the holidays; salaries.
Preparation of work (6%):	Organising the work and seeing it go well; experiencing the success of a well organised project.

When considering stress, it is important to make the distinction between the presence of negative job aspects and the absence of positive ones. It then becomes a matter of being aware, not only of those things which can cause stress, but also of the aspects that can bring satisfaction and joy. Rather than focusing on removing negative features, our attention should perhaps be directed towards developing and providing a teaching environment within schools in which feelings such as trust and satisfaction can be nurtured and encouraged, and appropriate support given.

CHAPTER 5: COPING WITH STRESS

A review of the literature

The relationship between the causes and consequences of stress is perhaps best explained in terms of how we cope. This area has not, to any extent, been the focus of literature on occupational stress, although several researchers have expressed the need for investigatory studies. Some (e.g. Cooper and Crump, 1978) urge that effort should be directed toward developing preventive strategies to reduce stress before it becomes a problem. Others (Newman and Beehr, 1979) suggest that the various ways in which individuals cope with stress could be usefully explored in order to stimulate further research in the area.

Another argument is that coping is intimately linked with stress and, thus, stressful situations are to a great extent determined by the individual's ability to deal appropriately with the situation. Therefore, we ought to be just as concerned with developing information on coping as we have been on detailing and considering the causes and consequences of occupational stress.

This chapter takes up the challenge. It not only looks at research findings, but also attempts to conceptualise and classify a range of behaviours people use to cope with stress at work.

In most discussions of occuptional stress, an essentially homeoestatic model is used. The term *"homeoestatis"* was used by Cannon (1929) to refer to an inner state of equilibrium. Since then it has been frequently used in association with the term *"stress"*. It generally expresses the idea that our well-being as individuals requires that we attempt to maintain ourselves on an *"even keel"* in the face of situations we perceive to be threatening, or about to challenge or tax our resources.

When our equilibrium is disrupted, we generally experience some discomfort - the symptoms of which may be either emotional or physical (e.g. headaches, tiredness, tenseness) or both. We need to make an adjustment in order to return to equilibrium. How soon we do so depends on the effectiveness of the coping strategy we use. If the strategy is not effective, the disruption to our equilibrium continues.

In Selye's (1977) terms, restoring equilibrium requires that we call on our supplies of *"adaptive energy"*. This energy is finite and when supplies are depleted, the conditions associated with *"disequilibrium"* become chronic and intense, and can eventually undermine our health. This is why some stress-related illnesses are referred as *"diseases of maladaptation"*.

It is important to note that, in restoring equilibrium, we do not necessarily return to the precise level of functioning that preceded our confrontation with stress. Homoeostatis is not a static condition. Each of us operates with a steady state, the threshold of which is affected by influences such as personality, social experiences and environment. The whole process of maintaining equilibrum is a continual sequence of variations, reactions and responses.

French et al (1974) suggest that coping succeeds when there is a *"person-environment fit"*. Successful coping, they claim, can entail changing the environment, changing the person, or changing or adjusting our perceptions of the situation.

McGrath (1976) argues that although coping responses are to a certain degree specific to each task and situation, there are general classes of responses such as the *"do nothing"* alternative, the *"keep on doing what I am doing"* attitude and *"I will physically or psychologically withdraw from the situation"* response.

Burgoyne (1975), on the other hand, talks about the following: avoidance (if stress is fundamentally determined by the situation - then getting out of the situation is the most obvious way of escaping stress), defence mechanisms (adjusting the perception of reality to preserve inner balance), and learning (acquiring the ability to control outcomes in stress situations).

Kremer and Owen (1979) classify the different strategies for managing stress into three groups. The first group is described as avoidance strategies. The authors suggest that part of the skill in avoiding stressful situations is to be able to distinguish situations that can be dealt with from those that cannot. Situations that cannot be dealt with must either be accepted or avoided. The second group involves relaxation training, enhanced by exercise. Coping with stress demands a lot of energy, and through relaxation and exercise, we can improve our health and thus build up stamina. The authors suggest a coordinated programme of exercise and relaxation to break the *"stress-tension cycle"* (in which each new hassle not only adds to our stress but also depletes the resources of energy we need to cope - thus preventing us from breaking the cycle).

The third group encompasses techniques that involve appraising problems more effectively. Each of us has some influence over how we perceive and interpret a situation and thus over the impact it has on us. By becoming aware of the effect of *"maladaptive appraisals"* (e.g. *"This is a disastrous situation"; "I never do anything right"*), we can learn to avoid making them. Instead, we can use more effective methods of reducing stress.

Kyriacou (1980), using a sample of 42 full-time teachers, identified the following coping strategies: expressing feelings (swearing), seeking support (talking things over), taking considered actions (keeping things in perspective, rationalizing the situation), and thinking of other things (making an effort to enjoy yourself, thinking of the good things in the future).

Other writers are more prescriptive in their approach to the coping strategies teachers use. Techniques which they have identified are set out in **Table 17**. Although there is an array of techniques, several common themes are present. They include: identifying the source of stress and its possible consequences; developing an awareness of your goals, your expectations and your feelings; maintaining a balanced approach to your work (this includes attention to diet, exercise, relaxation and recreation); and developing supportive relationships with colleagues, family, friends.

TABLE 17: SPECIFIC STRATEGIES FOR HANDLING TEACHER STRESS

Author	Theoretical Background	Coping Strategies
Stevenson and Milt (1975)	If teachers can cope with their daily frustrations, then they may be more successful in helping others make a healthy adjustment to life.	1 Talk things over with someone you trust. 2 Bring up important problems at staff meetings. 3 Release anger through physical activity. Taking the steam out of the situation will leave you better prepared to handle the problem. 4 Take yourself out of worries by doing something for someone else. 5 Work your way out of overload situations by setting priorities. 6 Do the best you can as that is

		all anyone can expect of you. 7 Remember that it is you who set impossible goals for yourself, and it is your own competitive spirit which is the driving force. 8 Escape for a time so that you are able to view things objectively. 9 Be considerate of others as this makes things easier for yourself - if people no longer feel threatened, they will have less cause to be threatening. 10 Build into your day a time for leisure activities.
Sylwester (1977)	Responding to stress takes energy. Because this energy supply is limited, how can you use it efficiently?	1 Decide which stressors to respond to. 2 Decide how much energy they will expend. 3 Balance stressful periods with less stressful, recuperative ones. This includes balance in the days' instructional activities and duty free lunch periods. 4 Try relaxation and meditation, relaxed weekends and vacations. 5 Get a good night's sleep - keep physically fit. 6 Develop good dietary habits. 7 Develop good supportive relationships - family, friends, etc. 8 Recognise that stress is part of your life and become more aware of how it affects you and what you can do about it. 9 Every now and again, pamper yourself. Don't punish yourself out of guilt.
Styles and Cavanagh (1977)	Teachers need to take a constructive attitude towards stress by adapting positively to the pressure stress generates, rather than unthinkingly attempting to eliminate stress entirely.	1 Recognise the role that expectations play in giving you either a feeling of gratification or frustration. Set realistic expectations. 2 Instead of worrying about problems and not doing anything to break the inertia barrier by setting priorities, taking specific action and completing within a certain time frame. 3 Build into your life-style regular periods of self-evaluation. 4 Mentally distance yourself

		from a stressful situation and then view it dispassionately and try to see the humourous side of it. The secret is knowing when to take oneself "*seriously*" and when not to. 5 Make the most of the present - don't get overwrought about the future. Judicious planning often anticipates and mitigates the onset of potential problems. 6 Get adequate rest, sleep and exercise. 7 Learn to recognise that stress need not be distressful. Remember that certain kinds of stress are normal, desirable, healthy, and functional.
Gmelch (1978)	Stress is a normal condition of living in today's complex society. It is a condition to which the school administrator is not immune.	1 Learn to cope with stress through managing time. 2 Manage by objectives, not by the obvious. 3 Build mini variations into the day. 4 Minimise the stress on others by in-service training. 5 Recognise that change takes time and that not all things can be changed. 6 Develop periods of planned self-analysis. This awareness will allow concentration on capabilities and delegation of limitations to those better qualified. 7 Develop and maintain life goals.
Hendrikson (1979)	Teacher burnout is a response to overload. It is the result of unyielding demands and the environment within which teaching is done. Yet it can be coped with.	1 Recognise the symptoms - physical, emotional and attitudinal exhaustion. 2 Face the symptoms without relying on over-reacting, drinking too much, taking pills or withdrawing. 3 Recognise that you are responsible only for how you respond to the crisis. 4 Look closely at the situation you are in so that you can pinpoint the causes of the stress you are experiencing. 5 Keep a journal and list your joys and stresses, then the journal will record your experiences and you will be able to distinguish between those experiences coming from outside of you and those from within.

Cruickshank (1980)	Must identify the problems of teaching and establish their ownership.	1 State the problem. 2 Identify the goal - remember the definition of a problem: someone has a goal and cannot achieve it. 3 Identify the problem's owner. 4 How valuable is the goal? 5 Identify the obstacles in the way of goal achievement. 6 Project ways by which the goal could be achieved. 7 List all the projected solutions and the possible consequences of each. 8 Rate each proposed solution. 9 Decide how to implement the best proposed solution and then do it. 10 Decide whether you are satisfied in relation to goal achievement.
Alschuler (1980)	Even if your school is only a mildly stressful place, it is to your advantage and in the interests of students to reduce the overall levels of the stress.	1 Make a list of stressful events that occurred during a recent specific period. 2 Categorise the list of stressful incidents. 3 Then individually, or as a group, determine the three most important and stressful. 4 Develop a plan for reducing the most important cause of stress. 5 Implement that plan.
Swick and Hanley (1980)	The development of stress management techniques that classroom teachers can use to better handle the personal and professional facets of their lives.	1 Know yourself - do I have a special time when I can get in touch with my personal feelings? Do I have a good understanding of the way I relate to people and how these relationships affect my behaviour? Have I examined my teaching self for the purposes of developing methods for coping with stress? 2 Develop stress management as a workable concept. Decide whether to respond to a particular stressor, decide how much energy to expend on the stressor, arrange a balance between stressful periods and relaxing ones. 3 Organise the environment to prevent unhealthy stress. 4 Develop the teaching team as a resource in handling stress. 5 Establish personal and professional priorities. 6 Maintain sound physical and mental health. 7 Provide for self-renewal.

Goens and Kuciejczyk (1981)	Work-related stress exists in schools, but what can supervisors do about it?	1 Let teachers know what is expected of them. 2 Unite the staff through a *"we"* approach. 3 Establish and maintain a low conflict, low stress climate. 4 Isolate conflict to a specific issue or issues. 5 Apply a problem-solving model to find solutions to issues. 6 Help teachers to define their teaching. 7 Provide support to help teachers meet those objectives. 8 Promote and establish a confidential employee assistance programme. 9 Review role expectations and resolve role conflict. 10 Communicate in a rewarding and positive way.
Manitoba Teachers Society (1981)	There are no easy solutions to the problem of stress, but ...	1 Build resistance through good health habits. 2 Exercise regularly. 3 Review your day-to-day situation. Determine the causes of stress and how to deal with them. 4 Take control of your life. Schedule stressful events so that they don't all happen at once. 5 Simplify your life - set aside time for relaxation and solitude. 6 Set reasonable goals for yourself. 7 Learn to manage time effectively. 8 Earn the love and emotional support of family and friends.
Wangberg (1982)	While we may not be able to control stress, we must realise that we are responsible for our reactions to stressors.	1 Teachers must get rid of the myth of the *"super teacher"* and begin to focus on and feel satisfied with the successes they do have. 2 Teachers must learn that they cannot continue to give without replenishing. 3 Teachers also need to take time off. Time management techniques enable teachers to use time more effectively so they gain more time off. 4 Teachers need to develop environments where teachers can admit failures, share successes and support one

		another. 5 Professional growth opportunities should be developed and chosen with teacher input.
Felder and Schomburg (1983)	What can be done to manage stress positively and to make stressful situations less threatening to psychological and physical health.	1 Assess the situation. 2 Take control of the way you spend your time. 3 Avoid the urge to *"fight"*. 4 Be creative. 5 Take care of yourself. 6 Develop perspective. 7 Change your direction and course but never give up.

Preventive techniques

Other approaches to coping with work-related stress are concerned with developing our ability as individuals to diagnose the *"symptoms"* of stress while they are at an easily treatable stage, and with creating climates of mutual support and trust at the place of work. The latter method generally refers to preventive techniques available at the organisational level, whereas the former usually focuses on increasing our awareness that certain role behaviours may have harmful effects on us. It aims to provide us with information about our vulnerability as individuals to certain stress-related illnesses and to suggest coping actions designed to reduce the risk as much as possible.

A number of studies refer to preventive techniques available at the organisational level. Torrington and Cooper (1977) consider a range of interventions that could come from personnel or service departments. Under the heading of *"operational strategies"*, they include: performance reviews, professional counselling and training. While under the heading of *"influential techniques"*, they include the establishment of selection and promotion criteria, individual mobility requirements and grievance procedures.

Preventive stress management provides, according to Quick and Quick (1979), a means by which *"certain actions can enhance the organisational climate, promoting eustress and reducing the experience of distress in organisations"*. Taking the strain out of the situation can be achieved by what Quick and Quick describe as Level 1 preventions.

These include restructuring jobs or redefining roles. Level 2 preventions include individual techniques (relaxation, meditation, biofeedback, for example) aimed at dissipating stressful feelings before they become damaging.

Kets de Vries (1979) suggests that organisations should carry out stress audits, designed to obtain information on how the organisation is affecting its members. This information in turn, provides a base from which both individuals and the organisation can begin to make adjustments. Stress levels are monitored by measuring the contribution which different organisational variables (physical working conditions, technology, role pressures, interpersonal relationships, career issues) make to the welfare of the organisation as a whole, and to the well- being of its individual employees.

From this information, *"problem solving systems"* are created to deal not only with the structuring of organisational tasks and requirements, but also with identifying the characteristics of those assigned to carry out the tasks and meeting the requirements which they should possess.

Sparks (1983) offers teachers a workshop approach to stress prevention and management. The idea is that by working through a *"stress inventory"* (Sparks and Ingram, 1979), teachers acquire more precise knowledge of what causes them stress as individuals. As a result, each teacher can select more appropriate stress management techniques. The procedure requires teachers to identify those events which produce stress, and then to code each event according to who is involved, how frequently the event occurs, how much control they have over it, and how they are dealing with it at the present time.

Once this inventory has been completed, teachers mark the events they believe they can do something about and would most like to work on. The next step is to review the information on the stress inventory for patterns, looking for the source of most of the stressful events and ascertaining whether the same sort of people tend to be involved; the frequency with which the events occur; and whether certain types of responses are habitually used to deal with the situation.

With this information, teachers can then (individually or in groups) consider a range of management strategies. As we might expect, these generally include such strategies as: maintaining physical health, relaxing, developing a balanced perspective and utilising professional support groups; as well as collectively considering job redesigning and restructuring, and staff development.

A broader, but nonetheless relevant approach for preventing teacher stress from becoming a problem, has been suggested by Sylwester (1983). He focuses on developing a school environment that provides a more relevant education for students. Schools can, according to Sylwester, become *"stress reduction agencies"* by providing students with information and skills necessary for life in the latter part of the twentieth century and by allowing the teachers the opportunity to work in an environment where they feel they are helping students.

Sylwester outlines three steps for the reduction of school stress. The first is, developing and teaching a curriculum more closely matched to current economic, technological and social issues. The second is, matching the curriculum and instruction to students' needs and abilities and creating a wholesome school environment. The last step requires the school to provide students with as many options as possible for energy expenditure; the school thus becomes a laboratory for observing and learning stress management strategies.

The preventive strategies outlined above suggest approaches to reconciling needs and organisational requirements, at least to the extent that stressful situations become less disruptive. All are concerned with establishing an environment in which individuals perceive the opportunity for constructive coping. All offer a means by which stressful situations can be identified, the impact assessed and a range of coping strategies considered.

CHAPTER 6: STRESS MANAGEMENT

Management strategies: self-awareness exercise

If you wish to carry out your own *"stress management"* programme, turn to the questionnaire in **Appendix II**, which lists events concerning your role as a teacher. Consider each event, then rate it in terms of its frequency, the amount of anxiety it creates, and how tired it leaves you. Once you have worked your way through the list, look for those events which cause you fatigue. Note them. Then, turning to the coping section, rate each of the strategies according to the frequency with which you use it. Compare these coping strategies you use frequently with the events causing your anxiety or fatigue. You may wish to consider how effective those strategies are in reducing your stress, what other strategies you could use, and what changes could be made to reduce some of the anxiety and exhaustion connected with your job.

Work through the questionnaire on your own. Then compare your results with those of other teachers. Why not consider coming together as a group or school to discuss some of the issues your results raise.

If the initiative for action should come from the individual, what can he or she do to diagnose and handle his or her stress? As mentioned earlier, one way is to develop our adaptive capacity; that is, to improve our awareness of the harmful effects of stress and hopefully to stimulate some positive action. In order to develop our awareness, the idea is that we monitor our life situation and make changes. We can learn to observe how often, with whom, and under what sort of circumstances we experience stress, then we can begin to take specific actions to cope with those circumstances.

Greater self-awareness may lead us to re-evaluate important aspects of our lives. We may find we want to reassess some of the goals we have set ourselves, and even perhaps to consider making fundamental changes in our lifestyle. Several authors offer self-awareness exercises that may provide a helpful basis for re-evaluation. For example, Muse (1980), in his workshop manual *"Survival of Stressed Teachers"*, suggests an exercise that illustrates the relationship between individual goals and stressful situations. You are asked to list three causes of stress, followed by three dislikes about yourself, to determine if the dissatisfactions you express about yourself are related to your perceived inability to achieve and accomplish what you want.

This is done by answering two questions. The first is: *"When you think about the things that cause stress, is there any relationship between these events and the goals you have set for yourself?"* The second is: *"Are you finding it too stressful to accomplish the goals you want to accomplish?"* If the answer to the second question is *"yes"*, then Muse suggests you consider whether you may in fact be happier if you set yourself more realistic goals.

Other strategies are designed to provide us with information about our vulnerability to certain stress-related illnesses, and to examine coping skills which may lessen the risk considerably.

McCann (1977) discusses the development of a *"health risk profile"* - a computerised assessment of personal risk factors associated with coronary heart disease. The uniqueness of this programme is that it tells the individual how s/he differs from the risk profile of individuals with similar medical characteristics and living habits, and how these risk factors may change if certain lifestyle changes take place. The point is that risk factors are directly or indirectly affected by daily living habits, and the more aware we are of habits that contribute to illness and disease then the more motivated we may be to make appropriate changes in our lifestyle.

In order to help us achieve some of these lifestyle changes, McCann suggests a number of *"self-examining"* questions. These include:

- -- *"Who am I?*
- -- *"What am I doing and where am I going in life?*
- -- *"How is my job affecting me?*
- -- *"Am I in an overload situation?*
- -- *"Are the risks I am taking worth the goal I am seeking?*
- -- *"In what areas and in what ways can I best ease my tension burden?"*

If you decide you need to make significant lifestyle changes in order to manage stress more effectively, you may also like to look at the following for getting started (Adams, 1977).

- -- **mobilisation** - making a responsible commitment to taking action - too frequently this commitment occurs only after we have been made aware of some risk

- -- **knowledge** - gathering information on different coping and stress management techniques and their worth so that you can make responsible lifestyle choices

- -- **patience** - recognising that improvements in health and well-being accrue very slowly and avoiding the desire to correct perceived difficulties *"at once"*

- -- **life-long learning** - recognising that stress management and lifestyle changes are learnt continually and are not just the result of one intervention

- -- **don't fight it if you can't win** - distinguishing between those situations over which you have control and those you do not

If the discussions in this and previous chapters help us to recognise situations that contribute to stress-related problems, and if we accept that our lifestyle has an important bearing on our ability to cope with stress, we may now like to look in more detail at some of the techniques that can help us to make *"lifestyle changes"*. Those described below (exercise, relaxation, meditation, biofeedback and a philosophy of life) are known as **capacity techniques**, because their purpose is to provide us with an inner sense of well-being and energy for handling, and building resistance to, stress.

Exercise, weight control and coronary heart disease

Medical opinions remain divided over the benefits of exercise, particularly, for example, on such issues as whether improvements in cardiovascular effciency (reduced work rate, greater stroke volume) provide beneficial effects. It is important, therefore, to distinguish between using exercise to improve our capacity to deal with stress and using exercise to protect against coronary heart disease.

Although the physically fit individual may be less physiologically susceptible to stressful situations (Quick and Quick, 1984) and thus better able to deal with stress, *"no direct relationship has been established between activity levels and the risk of coronary heart disease"* (WHO, 1982).

Using exercise to reduce weight, however, may reduce different risk factors associated with coronary heart disease. In essence, *"epidemiological studies have confirmed that a sedentary lifestyle increases the likelihood of heart attack, in comparison with a lifelong pattern of regular physical activity"* (Quick and Quick, 1984). Indeed, this would seem to be the view of the National Heart Foundation of New Zealand (1983) and other bodies (including the British Cardiac Society, 1976) who argue that some form of exercise is advisable for those who have sedentary lifestyles.

In addition, protecting against CHD may well - these organisations argue - require fundamental changes in our lifestyles. It would appear that the message for everyone is to consider taking preventive measures such as: *"the removal of unnatural factors such as cigarettes, excess fat in the diet and the body, excess salt and physical inactivity ... [as these] confer many health benefits beyond reducing the risk of CHD"* (Hay, 1983).

The fitness response

The fitness response is that state where the activity is vigorous enough to maintain your heart rate at a *"healthy overload"* level, thereby contributing to cardio-respiratory fitness. A number of formulas are available for determining the intensity level of the chosen exercise. As a general guide, the *"appropriate heart rate"* can be determined by first subtracting your age from the number 220. Then, depending on your condition, the frequency with which you exercise and other health factors, the rate at which your heart should be working during the exercise should be somewhere between 60 per cent to 80 per cent of this figure (see Yates, 1979).

If you are 35, for example, you would, depending on your general condition and the regularity with which you exercise, aim for a heart rate per minute during the exercise of between 111 to 148 beats. The difference between the lower and higher heart rate is often referred to as the target zone.

If you are just beginning an exercise programme, the idea would be to engage in an activity which gets your heart rate up to the lower end of your target zone and to sustain it around that level for the duration of the exercise. Then, as your condition improves, you can begin to raise the level until you reach the stage where you can maintain your heart rate at or near the top end of the target zone for the duration of the exercise.

Other authors offer other ways for calculating the intensity of the exercise. Getchell (1983) suggests a heart rate based on what he refers to as 75 per cent of your heart rate reserve. That is, you take the difference between the maximal heart rate (220) minus your age and your resting rate, multiply the difference between these two rates by 0.75 and add that result to your resting rate.

Taking as an example, the 35 year old again, with a resting heart rate of 80 then we would get a figure of 105, being the difference between maximal (220 - 35 = 185) and resting (80) rates. Take 75 per cent of this difference between the two rates (i.e. 105 x 0.75 = 79), add it to the resting rate and you have a heart rate of 159. This figure of 159 heart beats per minute represents what Getchell describes as the *"safe and effective training level"* for that individual. Getchell goes on to suggest that while *"the complexity of the results makes it difficult to establish a single ideal intensity, from our own experiences in training people, we recommend an exercise level of 75 per cent heart rate reserve for producing significant cardio-respiratory benefits" (1983:73).*

The idea of all the different calculations and formulas is to give to each of us some indication of the safe levels of vigorous exercise. Because these calculations are based on average figures for healthy individuals, if you intend to develop an exercise programme, consult your general practitioner who can give you specific information on your ability to exercise (particularly if you are over 35), your present condition, and the advantages and disadvantages of different types of exercise. **Many of us believe we are much fitter than we actually are, so the cautious approach is the best one to adopt.** Get professional advice, develop an exercise plan, begin gradually, and have regular medical checks.

The beneficial physiological effects of exercise are well documented. Following a period of regularly and properly performed exercise, there is generally a reduction in the resting heart rate, coupled with an improvement in the *"stroke volume"* - that is the amount of blood pumped by the heart at each stroke or beat. Described by Cooper (1983) as a *"conservation of energy"*, improving the stroke volume means that the heart does not have to work as hard to supply the body with blood.

If, by exercise, you can reduce the amount of work that your heart has to perform, you have a greater capacity to deal with stressful situations. Thus, if exercise helps in reducing your average per minute heart rate by say, 15 beats per minute, then over the space of 24 hours your heart beats 21,600 fewer times a day.

These sorts of improvements are usually associated with an improved aerobic capacity (breathing and the body's associated ability to use oxygen). An improved aerobic capacity results in the heart pumping blood more efficiently, the lungs ventillating larger volumes of oxygen, and the muscle cells taking up more oxygen and removing more waste products (Getchell, 1983:24-27; Cooper, 1982:chapter 6).

Regular exercise may also increase the levels, in the blood, of high density lipoprotein (HDL) which is believed to help protect against coronary heart disease by preventing cholesterol from building up on the walls of the arteries. Cooper (1983:83) describes the role of HDL as (1) coating the artery walls and thus providing a kind of protective layer of grease to prevent fatty deposits from building up; and (2) acting as scavengers by actually helping to dissolve fatty deposits when they do occur.

There is still much to be done in researching the lipid profiles of those who exercise. The effects of such factors as diet, weight loss, alcohol intake, exercise intensity, duration, frequency and type have yet to be fully researched and discussed. Nevertheless, there does appear to be general agreement that if exercise does help to increase the levels in the blood of HDL, then the case for exercise as a preventive measure to heart disease is enhanced.

Through exercise and eating habits, we can control body weight and thus help to prevent various risk factors associated with coronary heart disease from rising. Each of us ought to become more conscious of how our eating habits and exercise patterns contribute to weight gain or loss. We should remind ourselves that food provides energy which is measured in calories. The term *"calorie"* simply describes the energy potential of food. Then we can associate this fact with two other simple, but important, ideas (see Aronson, 1984).

First of all, if we take in more energy (food-calories) than we require or expend (via exercise, body functions, etc.) then the result will be a gain in weight. On the other hand, if we expend more energy (exercise, etc.) than we take in via food-calories, then the result will be a loss of weight. If we add to this the fact that the *"energy"* we don't expend is stored by the body as body fat, then that helps to remind us that when our food-calorie consumption is lowered by eating less and exercising then the body must find an alternative source of energy and it does this by using the energy we have stored up in body fat.

How can we put some of these ideas into practice? By doing a series of quick calculations to reinforce the belief that the best way to loose weight is by exercising and reducing our food intake. The first calculation is designed to give us some idea of our *"ideal"* body weight so that we can, as Aronson points out in her article *"Effective Weight Control"*, set realistic, reasonable weight goals that allow us to aim for a healthy body weight that we can maintain without starving or exercising ourselves ragged. The formula she offers is:

Males: 106 pounds for the first five feet of height plus 6 pounds for each additional inch;

Females: 100 pounds for the first five feet of height plus 5 pounds for each additional inch.

Remember the idea is, as Aronson stresses, to set a reasonable weight and one that will support individual needs and contribute to health and well-being. If you have performed the calculation above, then the next step is to work out the number of calories needed to maintain that body weight. This involves estimating how active you are and then multiplying your weight goal by your chosen activity level.

Aronson offers these guidelines: 13 for sedentary, 15 for moderately active, and 10 for very active. If you are a moderately active female of 5 feet 4 inches, you multiply 125 by 15 to arrive at a daily calorie intake of 1875. So if you are a reasonably active 5 feet 10 inches male then you multiply 166 by 15 to arrive at a daily calorie intake of 2490.

This is not the only method of calculating your ideal body weight and thus your daily calorie intake. At the risk of causing confusion, I will mention a number of other methods. These methods appear to assume that you have some idea of what you would like your body weight to be. I have included them just to make the point that there are numerous methods and thus variations in *"ideal"* body weights.

Fixx (1979) for example, suggests that you simply work out in pounds what you would like to weigh and then just multiply that figure by 15 to get your daily calorie intake. On the other hand, Getchell (1983) offers a formula based on your basal metabolic rate (the amount of energy-calories necessary to maintain the body when at rest).

So to arrive at your daily calorie intake, you work on the basis that one kilogram of body weight expends approximately one calorie per hour. Thus a 70 kilogram male would, at rest, use up 70 calories per hour or 1680 per day. For women, the calculation requires a 10 per cent reduction. Because this formula is based on energy-calorie expenditure at rest, you have to increase it by a factor of between 40 to 80 per cent, depending on how active you are. The guidelines propose a 40 per cent increase if your lifestyle is sedentary and (at the other extreme) 80 per cent if you engage in vigorous daily activities.

Once you have calculated a healthy body weight and you have some idea of how many calories you need to consume daily to maintain it, where does exercise come in? To lose one pound of weight, you must burn up 3500 calories. Exercise has an energy-calorie cost, and thus offers an appropriate way to burn up calories.

Although the energy-calorie used up by exercise is a complicated calculation depending on the intensity of the exercise, its duration and your weight, a very rough rule of thumb is that running a mile burns off about 100 calories. So if you don't eat beyond your calorie limit and run five miles a day, you would, after seven days (7 x 5 - 3500) lose a pound. We are talking in general terms here, because you can of course initially put weight on when you begin exercising (muscles weigh more than fat) but gradually your weight should begin to drop as your reduced calorie regime becomes effective.

Having determined what your calorie intake should be in order to maintain a comfortable weight, you can begin to reduce to that level by a programme of exercise and a smaller food intake. Such a regime provides for healthy weight reduction, allows for *"healthy"* eating without *"watching"* calories, and gradually brings your weight down. By reducing weight, we may prevent some of the risk factors associated with coronary heart disease from elevating.

Losing weight via exercise and healthy eating offers a two-fold benefit - helping to reduce the risk of heart disease while providing some of the physical and psychological benefits that come through regular activity. This whole section on exercise is important as you have probably gathered by now. Because it is important and because of the need to keep the role of exercise in perspective, it is necessary to end as cautiously as we began. Don't start an exercise programme, particularly if you are over 35 or have a history of heart disease, without first discussing your objectives with your doctor.

Remember that most of us believe that we are a lot fitter than we actually are and all too frequently set over-ambitious goals. All the calculations are based on average figures with normal shapes and sizes and the advice given assumes that individuals are healthy. The idea, in providing all this information on exercise, is simply to make each of us aware not only of the limits within which *"vigorous healthy exercise"* takes place, but also that many benefits are best gauged over a long term and not measured in short term bursts of activity or weight loss.

Exercise and good dietary habits require *"lifestyle"* changes and thus should become an important part of our lives, providing good health and psychological well-being. For these reasons, consult your doctor and take advantage of the references in the back of this book to read further about the role of exercise in providing health and fitness.

Learning to relax

Emotional and mental tension are closely linked with body tension. Feelings of anxiety, worry, inadequacy and so on often have their physical counterpart in headaches and various other *"aches and pains"* as the muscles tense up. Many people have found that a relaxation programme helps them to improve their capacity to reduce body tension, and therefore stress. Several relaxation techniques are outlined in this section. Before discussing these, however, it is appropriate to recall the implications of the *"flight or fight"* response we referred to in **Chapter 1**.

We noted that when confronted with a threatening (stressful) situation, the body's autonomic nervous system reacts by releasing different stress hormones into the blood. This causes various physiological changes (elevated blood pressure, rapid breathing, increased oxygen consumption, the diversion of blood away from non-essential activities to the brain and muscles), which are essential to prepare us to fight or flee the situation. **Chapter 1** pointed out that emotions such as anger or fear are frequently associated with these physiological changes, and that constant *"flight or fight"* readiness can impair our health.

Relaxation response

The question we must now ask is: *"Can we also produce a response that allows us to 'turn off' or dissipate some of the harmful effects of the 'flight or fight' response?"* The answer, at least according to Benson (1976), is *"yes"*. Each of us has *"a natural and innate protective mechanism against overstress which allows us to turn off harmful bodily effects to counter the effects of the flight or fight response"*. This is the *"relaxation response"*.

Benson reviewed a number of Eastern and Western religious practices, and subsequently suggested the four basic components of the relaxation response. These are:

1 **A quiet environment** - a place where it is easy to eliminate distracting thoughts

2. **A mental device** - a sound, word or phase used repeatedly to help break the stress spiral and to prevent the emergence of distracting thoughts
3. **A passive attitude** - to allow relaxation to occur at its own pace
4. **A comfortable position** - to prevent undue muscular tension

You may like to begin by sitting quietly in a comfortable position. Close your eyes and then progressively work your way down your body, relaxing the various muscles as you go. Once you have done this, you will probably become conscious of your breathing. (Breathe if possible, through the nose.) As you become more aware of the rhythmic nature of your breathing, you should, as you breathe out, repeat to yourself the *"mental device"* - usually a single syllable word. Benson suggests the word *"one"*. You should continue to do this for up to 20 minutes. At the end of the period and before standing up, you should sit quietly for a time, at first with your eyes closed and then opened.

The mental device serves two purposes. First of all it helps to prevent the intrusion of distracting thoughts. Stress is often caused by a number of thoughts going round and round in our minds, producing what is called the *"stress spiral"*. The mental device is used to block them out, so that the relaxation process continues at its own pace. A passive attitude is also important. As the distracting thoughts catch your attention, try to regard them in a passive way; let them remain in the mind and then after a time gently push them out by refocusing attention on the mental device. The second purpose of the mental device is to provide a symbolic release of some of your inbuilt tension. This happens when you repeat the word every time you breathe out.

Work published by Benson and his colleagues suggested that using the relaxation response for two, 20 minute periods a day resulted in significant decreases in blood pressure and marked improvement in general health, performance and well-being.

The relaxation response is *"autogenic"*, meaning self-generating. In other words, certain responses become associated with particular thoughts. Thinking about a near miss when last driving the car can evoke a physiological reaction similar to that of the flight or fight response. This is called a *"conditioning response"*. So, if thinking about a certain situation produces a conditioned alarm response, it must be possible to produce a relaxation response by focusing on other situations.

Imagine warming yourself in front of an open fire and as you begin to feel the heat from the fire warm your body, you begin to feel relaxed. You have associated a particular situation with relaxation and thus automatically produced a relaxed response. Similar examples are given by Girdano and Everly (1979) who suggest that many of us are more conditioned towards negative thoughts than towards positive ones. Using an autogenic relaxation response is one way in which we counteract this.

Taking this autogenic idea a stage further, suggests that we ought to consider attitudes and thinking that surround particular events. If we can learn to think differently about different situations, we may be able to alter their emotional impact. Meichenbaum (1977) for example, suggests that statements such as *"I can't go on"* or *"I can't do any more"* frequently turn what is essentially a non-threatening situation into a threatening one. If we begin to monitor the way in which we appraise certain situations to become more aware of maladaptive appraisals (exaggeration for example) then, according to Meichenbaum, we can practise and rehearse new appraisals which will lead to different responses to stressful situations and thus more effective coping.

Before concluding this outline of the relaxation technique, two other variations are worth noting. Manuso (1979) suggests that by learning a *"quietening response"*, the stress sequence can be broken. Thus, when faced with a stressful situation which includes minor annoyances, we should take two deep breaths (paying particular attention to relaxing the tongue, jaw and shoulders), while at the same time telling ourselves that we will not let our body get involved in the *"stress cycle"*. Verity (1977) offers a relaxation technique to calm the mind. Attention is focused on breathing, and as the mind becomes still, the whole body begins to relax.

Finally it is worth drawing attention to neuromuscular relaxation. This technique, well described by Girdano and Everly in *"Controlling Stress and Tension"*, is based on the fact that the muscles make up a large proportion of the body's mass. The set of exercises the authors suggest enables you to learn to relax different muscles. This helps to reduce total body tension and develops your awareness of which muscles tense up when you are under stress.

Transcendental meditation

TM philosophy stems from the belief that we depend too much on the environment for our psychological well-being and not enough on our inner resources. Thus, as our levels of stress increase, our capacity to be enthusiastic, energetic and efficient falls (Frew, 1977).

TM provides a strategy for helping people attain their full potential by balancing the functions of the sympathetic and parasympathetic branches of the autonomic nervous system. The process of TM develops a state of *"restful alertness"* (Kory, 1976), which gradually dissipates unresolved tensions and improves the capacity to react adaptively to stressful situations.

The TM technique is not dissimilar to the relaxation response. It involves finding a quiet environment; that is, an environment that helps you to relax. Not only should external surroundings be restful but you should also try to relax the *"internal physical environment"* by assuming a comfortable position that minimises muscle tension.

Indeed TM instruction frequently suggests it is necessary to spend time on relaxing muscles in order to overcome the biggest obstacle to complete meditation. The next step involves using the mantra to quieten the mind. This mantra is a specially chosen word given by the TM instructor and is used as a means of directing stressful thoughts away from the mind, allowing the meditator to reach the state of *"creative self-awareness"*.

The full ritual is taught by the TM instructor and meditation usually takes about 20 minutes. A passive attitude is important. The object is to let the meditation process proceed at its own pace. The intrusion of stressful thoughts can be controlled through the use of the mantra but, as Girdano and Everly point out, TM is not just saying the mantra - it is a feeling, an experience, a state of mind.

The benefits gained from regular use of TM (reduced blood pressure, improved productivity, increased desire to satisfy higher-order needs) have been reported by a number of authors. Like the relaxation response, TM is therefore a suitable strategy for dealing with work-related stress. You can practise TM alone; all that is needed is a quiet environment. It does not require analysis of behaviour and it complements other behavioural techniques.

Biofeedback

A technique to develop self-awareness of the signals that our bodies send when we are under stress is biofeedback. Biofeedback is defined as a measurement procedure* that permits the individual to monitor a particular body function (Ford and Hartje 1978).

> * Although a number of measures are taken together, the most common is that of muscle tension. In this case, the machine measures the level of electrical energy associated with muscle contraction. The machine simply monitors the level of tension of particular muscles and relays this level of tension to the individual. Initially the machine emits a low hum. As the individual tenses, the muscles contract. The machine picks up this activity and feeds it back to the individual by tone changes. Increases in tension are associated with a rise in tone and there is a corresponding reduction in the tone level as the tension drops and the individual relaxes. By becoming more aware of the feelings associated with the tone level of the machine, the individual learns to control the level of tension. The number of training sessions required is around 12, with sessions of one hour being held twice a week.

The procedure involves monitoring physiological functioning with electronic equipment. It is, in effect, a means of learning how to recognise and control certain processes which may have stressful consequences. Initially, biofeedback requires a person to be attached to a machine that continuously monitors some physiological process. This information is fed back to that person through the use of a humming device or by needles moving across a dial. Movement and noise levels are sensitive too, and indicate the state of the physiological process. In this way individuals come to recognise a stressed from a relaxed state, and usually they are given instruction in various meditation or autogenic techniques so they can develop the relaxed state.

The instruments provide an important reinforcement function and the idea is to *"identify for yourself the subjective state of relaxation with its associated experiences that the machines indicates you have reached"* (Harvey, 1978). With regular practise, some people, on recognising the onset of stressful feelings, can simply tell themselves that they are not going to get upset - with the result that their body reacts automatically to this suggestion and the feelings dissipate.

Some authors (e.g. Ford and Hartje) describe the advantages of biofeedback over other stress reduction techniques. They point out that less time is lost from the job, costs are lower, its effectiveness can be objectively measured, and it does not force the individual into ethical or moral considerations. Others point out that much more research is necessary if the usefulness of biofeedback is to be established and its limitations delineated. This caution should be noted.

Philosophy of life

A number of studies discuss this approach, which usually involves getting your work life into perspective, evaluating your capabilities and your expectations. Oates (1972) for example suggests that for the work addict to obtain *"the fullness of life"*, s/he must first view life in its totality. Work is but one part of life and Oates describes the building of other activities into a fuller life through a process of *"design for human living"*. A key approach is to discuss what really matters and to leave aside that which does not.

Kiev's (1974) *"strategies for daily living"* stem from the belief that anxiety creates self-defeating behavioural patterns which, on the surface at least, appear socially acceptable. Daily living strategies (establishing goals, discovering hidden potential, mastering negative emotions, setting priorities, managing time, overcoming obstacles) can, according to Kiev, provide a general set of rules for dealing with change and for objectively viewing activities and problems; these rules can also form the basis of a mature personal philosophy for handling stress.

The individual must recognise that work is just one part of his/her total being, that lifestyles are not determined by work activities and that a philosophy of life designed around *"daily living principles"* can provide an order and establish a *"mutually reinforcing continuity"* between work life and away from work.

McQuade and Ackman (1978) suggest that the way we choose to live, or, as is more often the case, *"the life that has chosen us"*, renders us vulnerable to stress-related illness. These authors argue that we have not yet developed a means for coping with the stresses of the twentieth century. Our minds and bodies have failed to keep pace with technological change. They review a range of techniques people use (exercise, diet, relaxation, meditation, drugs, psychotherapy) and suggest that the last quarter of this century may see a new period of development which they describe as a time of *"inner action"*, where individuals attempt to create an inner sense of well-being by using the different techniques to develop a healthier, more spiritual, balanced, happier self.

Similarly, Ogilvie and Porter (1974) suggest that heart disease, which can catch up with executives who pursue career-oriented achievement at all costs and in compensation for various disappointments, is nothing less than an unconscious form of suicide. According to these authors, it is only by examining their own behaviour and questioning whether business achievement can *"ever become a truly self-fulfilling human experience"* that such executives will begin to acknowledge the negative aspects of business *"success"*. They provide some questions that allow individuals to reflect on the quality of their lives. The questions deal with, for example, whether in fact an individual's work rate can contribute to a sense of being valued as an individual and his/her contributing to and being supportive in various family and social relationships.

Woolfolk and Richardson (1979) suggest that thinking in certain ways creates stress in our lives. They argue that certain (mistaken) beliefs evoke certain emotions, and that only by understanding and examining the beliefs that underlie these emotions can we come close to the awareness needed to handle such feelings.

Stress management training is all about recognising and changing *"mistaken beliefs"*, which include believing that life ought to be free of discomfort. This results in a low tolerance of inevitable hassles and frustration.

A number of authors argue that stress can be transformed into a creative force, which develops our resources and improves our capacity to deal successfully with a wide range of situations. One of these authors (Albrecht, 1979) suggests *"that learning to deal more effectively with stress is not to avoid challenges but to capitalise on them"*.

This can be achieved through stress reduction training which involves using physical relaxation, self-management and lifestyle management skills to cope with the difficulties associated with one's career. These techniques become the three *"anti-stress skills"*, which enable the individual to respond in a calmer and less aroused way when faced with stressful situations, and to monitor continually the balance of stresses and regards in all areas of their life.

Summary

When considering the techniques briefly reviewed in this chapter, it is important to remember that none is a universal cure for stressful situations. The usefulness of each technique depends very largely on our commitment to, and belief in, the technique itself. What is appropriate for one person may be inappropriate for another. Each of us must decide which technique, if any, we feel comfortable with and which seems to provide an opportunity for personal and professional growth.

It is equally important to remember that none of these techniques will entirely eliminate stress. All of us need some stress in order to maintain a certain level of energy and activity. The techniques we have reviewed provide us with a means whereby we can develop an inner sense of energy and well-being for dealing with, and building resistance to, stress-related difficulties.

Many of the techniques advocate fundamental lifestyle changes and not simply an extra coping strategy we can *"tack on"* to our coping repertoire. Some relaxation and meditation techniques offer a means of escape from reality. It therefore becomes important to consider periodically how and why we use the meditation.

Specific coping strategies

As stated at the beginning of the previous chapter, the primary focus of most occupational stress research has been on identifying its causes and consequences, and only recently has there been any attempt to determine how people cope with work-related stress. One criticism of much of this latter research however, is that it has been too general. In other words, coping styles have simply been described in terms of broad categories (approach - avoidance) with little information on what specific behaviours should be included in such categories. If we are to develop our understanding of coping styles then it is important that we begin to collect information on the specific strategies individuals use.

To begin with, because of the potential confusion between coping with the original source of stress and coping with stressful feelings, it is important to distinguish explicitly between two types of coping strategies: direct action skills and palliatives (Lazarus, 1975). **Direct action** skills attempt to solve the problem or master the situation directly; **palliatives** are concerned with reducing the feelings of emotional discomfort. Thus, we may define coping as an attempt to respond to a threat or challenge, with the aim of mastering it, or of substantially reducing any discomfort it induces. This definition covers both the direct action and palliative techniques.

The situations in which teachers find themselves are so complex that it may not be possible to analyse the nature of the problem, or if the problem can be analysed, there may be little which can be directly done to solve it (e.g. don't get on with the headteacher but still have to work with him/her). Thus, it is frequently not a question of *"mastering"* the cause of stress, but alleviating the associated emotional discomfort.

To collect information on how individuals cope with work-related stress, a *"critical incident question"* can be used. Each respondent is asked to think of a particular time at work when they felt under stress, to describe what happened, and then to explain how they managed to cope with it.

Information can also be gathered by asking for responses to a question such as: *"If, like most people, you occasionally get fed up with your job and feel tense and frustrated, how do you cope?"* Such questions give us information on specific coping strategies and thus provide the basis for developing a classification of coping styles.

Research project: stage I

In the interview stage of the research project, individual teachers were asked two sets of questions on coping. The more specific set was: *"What sort of things cause pressures? What sort of things do you do to cope?"* From the 138 primary teachers who recalled incidents, 221 answers (coping behaviours) were given. These coping behaviours were grouped into 48 categories of *"coping actions"*.

Using the distinction between direct action (problem solving) and palliative (discomfort reducing) strategies, it was possible to classify 28 per cent of the behaviours as direct action. The remaining 72 per cent were palliatives (Table 18).

TABLE 18: "WHAT SORTS OF THINGS DO YOU DO TO COPE?"

Direct Action Strategies (28%)

-- Turn back to planning, organising.
-- Set priorities.
-- Work at it until it is finished.
-- Discipline the children.
-- Organise your classwork so that you can take a break.
-- Attempt to come to some rational solution.
-- Help each other share the workload.
-- Make rational use of time.
-- Positively reinforce the children.
-- Keep the children occupied.
-- Set standards.
-- Be consistent with the children.
-- Have some other activity you can change to when the children get restless.
-- Be honest with the children.
-- Stand up and make your point.
-- Be efficient.
-- Revert to basic teaching skills.
-- Separate a few children and keep them away from the others for a time.
-- Take short cuts on things you don't like doing.
-- Confront the principal.
-- Have it out with the person concerned.

Palliative (Regulation of Emotion) Strategies (72%)

-- Relax, go for a walk, play the piano, switch off.
-- Talk to more experienced colleagues.
-- Let off steam, explode, lose temper with children and other teachers.
-- Mix with adults not connected with teaching.
-- Have a sense of humour.
-- Try to leave worries at school.
-- Talk about it with your spouse.
-- Have an early night - get more sleep.
-- Ignore it and hope that it will go away.
-- Keep calm.
-- Take things as they come.
-- Pray.
-- Build up self-confidence.
-- Count to 10.
-- Take one day at a time.
-- Indulge in self-analysis to sort out the problem.
-- Think about other things.
-- Use self-control.
-- Avoid other staff members.
-- Drink.
-- Benefit from the satisfactions of teaching.
-- Look for support.
-- Use holidays to recuperate.
-- Compromise on standards.
-- Try not to let things get to you.
-- Be very diplomatic in the staff room.
-- Make everything a challenge.
-- Complain.
-- Try to find another job.

The general questions were: *"One of the things we are interested in finding out is the emotional impact that teaching has on you. How do you find it affects you? How do you cope with these feelings?"* This time, 136 answers produced 26 categories of coping behaviour. Almost all of these (96 per cent) were palliatives (Table 19).

TABLE 19: "HOW DO YOU COPE WITH THE EMOTIONAL IMPACT OF TEACHING?"

Direct Action Techniques (4%)

- Establish a routine - organise and plan.
- Have a quiet time in the classroom to settle the children down.
- Do something enjoyable with the children at the end of the day.

Palliative Techniques (96%)

- Play sport with the children.
- Shout at the children.
- Have a cup of tea and talk at home or in the staffroom.
- Find time for quietness and solitude to unwind and relax.
- Do something other than teaching - read, watch TV, exercise.
- Strike a balance between teaching and home life.
- Control your feelings - bottle things up.
- Complain to your family.
- Go home and try to work problem out.
- Sleep it off.
- Carry on as usual.
- Just let it happen.
- Get support from religious beliefs.
- Try to get out of the classroom.
- Have a drink - go to the pub.
- Leave early if you've had a bad day.
- When you get home, don't think about it until next day.
- Spend money to solve problems.
- Cut down on personal commitment.
- Don't let the children's problems become your own.
- Get philosophical about it.
- Think of a success story.

In order to ensure that a wide range of coping behaviours were gathered, other questions were asked: *"How do you think other teachers cope?"* and *"Do you find your teaching colleagues can help in coping with the problems of teaching? If so, how can they help?"* The responses to these questions, which are set out in **Tables 20 and 21**, represent a similar pattern of coping strategies to that found in the earlier questions.

TABLE 20: "HOW DO YOU THINK OTHERS COPE?"

Direct Action Strategies (15%)

- Better, more formal organisation.
- Punish the children.
- Behave in an authoritarian manner.
- Remove children's privileges.
- Establish priorities.
- Work at it until finished.
- Be very conservative teacher.
- Keep the children occupied.

Palliative Strategies (85%)

- Let off steam to others.
- Discuss it with colleagues, family or friends.
- Store it up - no release.
- Get away from it - relax, switch off.
- Just do what is necessary, no more.
- Become involved in activities outside of school.
- Get support from other teachers.
- Drink - take tranquillisers.
- Let the whole thing ride over you.

- Look for a new job.
- Doodle.
- Become very aggressive.
- Don't talk about it until it is over.
- Keep calm.
- Ignore difficulties.
- Draw on experience.
- Have day off.
- Just don't recognise the potential danger of children's behaviour.
- Get away from teachers outside of school.

TABLE 21: "DO YOU FIND YOUR TEACHING COLLEAGUES CAN HELP IN COPING WITH THE PROBLEMS OF TEACHING? IF SO, HOW CAN THEY HELP?"

- Having someone to discuss ideas and problems with, and to get encouragement and support from.
- Listening - being tolerant and sympathetic.
- Participating in teamwork - making the burden easier.
- Getting advice from senior teachers on teaching problems.
- Passing on new ideas and methods of teaching.
- Being there when you want to let off steam.
- Providing curriculum information.
- Giving reassurance that they are feeling the same.
- Participating in social activities to develop supportive relationships.
- Maintaining good relationships among staff.

It is noticeable that in many situations, teachers find very few direct action strategies are available to them, perhaps because of organisational structures within the school. The smaller range of direct action strategies suggests most teachers use the same ones, whereas the wider range of palliatives suggests that these may be individual to the teacher.

One issue to emerge when the answers to these questions were analysed was the difficulty of fitting some of them into either direct action or palliative categories. For example, working harder - a direct action (problem solving) strategy - can be used as a means of reducing emotional discomfort: *"Get your head down and get stuck into it. If you stop and think about it, it frightens you and you can't get started."* Also, *"getting angry with the children"*, while releasing some emotion, may also restore discipline, thus helping to solve classroom issues.

Main survey

The next step was to use the information collected in the interview stage to develop a *"teachers' checklist of coping strategies"*. From the range of strategies available, it was possible to identify 70 different ones which were dissimilar enough to include in the checklist (**Appendix III**).

Teachers who took part in the main survey were asked to consider each strategy on the checklist and to indicate how frequently they used it to cope with the problems of teaching. Responses were measured on a five-point scale ranging, from *"never"* to *"frequently"*.

The 10 most frequently used coping strategies are set out in **Table 22**. The first six of these are direct action strategies. This finding supports the proposition that organisational and school structures limit the number of direct action strategies to a small number that are frequently used by almost all teachers.

On the other hand, while the influence of individual differences in background, personality and environment produce a longer list of palliative strategies, specific palliative strategies are not used as frequently by a large number of teachers. In other words, palliatives are more specific to individual characteristics and school environments.

TABLE 22: THE 10 MOST FREQUENTLY USED COPING STRATEGIES

		In Rank Order Percentage *
1	Try to always be consistent and honest when dealing with the children.	95
2	Establish some sort of teaching routine.	93
3	Keep the children occupied.	89
4	Positively reinforce the children.	88
5	Be well organised and planned.	80
6	Use the holidays to recuperate.	78
7	Have a sense of humour - just see the humour of the situation.	72
8	Have a quiet time in the classroom to settle the children down.	71
9	Mix with people not connected with teaching.	70
10	Try to think objectively about the situation and keep your feelings under control.	66

* Percentage of main sample who indicated that they most frequently used thecoping strategy.

The next stage was to see whether any of the 70 coping strategies tended to be used together. For example, do teachers who tend to use *"coping strategy A"* also tend to use *"coping strategy C"*? This was in fact so, and six clusters of coping strategies accounted for 48 of the 70 strategies (**Tables 23 to 28**).

It should be noted that these tables simply list the coping strategies used. How effective those strategies were is not at issue here.

The first cluster represents a direct action strategy I have described as **rational task-oriented behaviour (Table 23)**. This is where the teacher takes steps to ensure s/he is consistent and organised when dealing with the children, (try always to be consistent and honest when dealing with the children, be well organised and planned, establish some sort of teaching routine, keep the children occupied, positively reinforce the children); think objectively about the situation (put the present problem into perspective of good things associated with teaching, think objectively about the situation, and keep feelings under control) and attempt to prevent deterioration in staff relationships (be very diplomatic in the staff room).

TABLE 23: COPING STRATEGY I - RATIONAL TASK-ORIENTED BEHAVIOUR

-- Try always to be consistent and honest when dealing with the children.
-- Be well organised and planned.
-- Think of good things associated with teaching.
-- Be very diplomatic in the staff room.

-- Try and think objectively about the situation and keep your feelings under control.
-- Establish some sort of teaching routine.
-- Keep the children occupied.
-- Positively reinforce the children.

The second strategy is a palliative one, in which the teacher attempts to distance herself/himself from the problems of the classroom and reduce their emotional impact on her/him by **adopting a conservative approach to teaching (Table 24).** This includes a range of strategies basically designed to maintain order and discipline in the classroom, so that children don't have the opportunity to get out of line and thereby become a source of stress (e.g. punish misbehaving children, make the children sit quietly, behave in a very authoritarian manner).

TABLE 24: COPING STRATEGY II - ADOPT A CONSERVATIVE APPROACH TO TEACHING

-- Behave in a very authoritarian manner.
-- Discipline - punish the children.
-- Make the children sit quietly.
-- Separate a few children out and keep them away from the other kids for awhile.
-- Stand up and make your point to the class.
-- Revert to basic teaching skills - be very conservative in your approach.

A third strategy can be described as **utilising colleague support**, which I regard as essentially palliative, as it provides for a release for emotions, rather than a direct tackling of the problem **(Table 25).** It includes talking the problem over to let off steam (express your irritation to other work colleagues just to be able to let off steam) and also seeking advice and support (try to get advice and suggestions from other, more experienced teachers, get reassurance from other teaching colleagues that they are feeling the same way, confront the principal with the problem).

TABLE 25: COPING STRATEGY III - UTILISING COLLEAGUE SUPPORT

-- Talk the problem over with teaching colleagues.
-- Try to get advice and suggestions from other, more experienced teachers.
-- Get reassurance from other teaching colleagues that they are feeling the same way.
-- Confront the principal with problems.
-- Express your irritation to other work colleagues just to be able to let off steam.

The fourth strategy involves **putting things into perspective (Table 26).** It includes standing back and trying to rationalise the situation, consciously forcing yourself to slow down and take a longer view of things, while at the same time influencing the situation by giving your opinion about how things are done and the way things are going at school, (let people know exactly where you stand, make sure people are aware you are doing your best).

TABLE 26: COPING STRATEGY IV - PUTTING THINGS INTO PERSPECTIVE

- Let people know exactly where you stand.
- Whenever possible, give your opinion about how things are done and the way things are going at school.
- Make sure people are aware you are doing your best.
- Stand back and try to rationalise the situation.
- Consciously force yourself to slow down and take a longer view of things.

The fifth strategy, also essentially palliative, is to **become less involved (Table 27)**. This includes reducing your professional commitment (forget work when finished for the day, leave school as soon as possible after 3 o'clock, don't take work home, don't work harder or longer than necessary, become more involved in non-teaching activities - hobbies, leisure, etc.) in addition to becoming less emotionally involved (just accept it is another job and do it, just ignore any difficulties, simply take one day at a time).

TABLE 27: COPING STRATEGY V - BECOME LESS INVOLVED

- Forget work when finished for the day.
- Just accept that it is another job and just do it.
- Leave school as soon as possible after 3 o'clock.
- Just ignore any difficulties.
- Don't take work home.
- Don't work harder or longer.
- Simply take one day at a time.
- Become more involved in non-teaching activities - hobbies, leisure, etc.

The final strategy seems to be an attempt to **ride out the situation (Table 28)**. This includes avoiding the issue (just simply give up and accept what's happening, try and prevent others from finding out you are under pressure, cover up problems rather than deal with them, simply avoid other staff members), coupled with some form of emotional relief either by way of expressing your feelings (get mad at yourself and tell yourself you could have avoided the situation, take your feelings out on whoever happens to be around, have a good cry, express your irritation and frustration to yourself) or by eating more or drinking more tea or coffee.

TABLE 28: COPING STRATEGY VI - ATTEMPT TO RIDE OUT THE SITUATION

- Get mad at yourself and tell yourself that you could have avoided the situation.
- Just take your feelings out on whoever happens to be around.
- Just have a good cry.
- Express your irritation and frustration to yourself - swearing, slaming things doen, crumpling up pieces of paper.
- Eat more.
- Just simply give up and accept what's happening.
- Try to prevent others from finding out about the pressures you are under.
- Analyse all the negative consequences so that you are prepared for the worst.
- Cover up the problems rather than deal with them.
- Drink more tea or coffee.

-- Simply avoid other staff members.
-- Take a day off.

If you are interested in how frequently you use each of these coping styles, turn to **Appendix III** and score yourself. The higher your score, the more frequently you use a particular strategy. You may like to consider why you use the different strategies, how effective you find them, and what impact they have on your emotional and physical well-being.

Remember, the more aware you are of the situations that cause you stress and of how you usually respond, the better you may become at determining how constructive your coping really is.

How do your results compare with the main survey? To find this out, begin by comparing how frequently you use each of the six coping strategies, with the frequency with which they were used by the main survey respondents. Remember, for each of the six strategies, your frequency score is calculated by simply adding the responses you have ringed or ticked for each of the items which make up a particular strategy. The higher your score, the more frequently you use that strategy. Then rank your scores, from *"most frequently used"* to *"least frequently used"*, and compare your ranking with that of the main survey strategies:

Rank Order		Coping Strategy
(Most frequently used)	1	Rational task-oriented behaviour
	2	Utilise colleague support
	3	Adopt a conservative approach to teaching
	4	Put things into perspective
	5	Become less involved
(Least frequently used)	6	Attempt to ride out the situation

One other interesting finding is the result of a comparison between men and women of the frequency with which they used the different coping strategies (**Table 29**). The most notable difference is that women made more frequent use of colleague support than men. Obviously the frequency with which a coping strategy is used depends on the situation being dealt with, but it is interesting to consider whether this finding supports the stereotype view that women are more likely to show their emotions than men are, and women are thus more likely to seek the support of others.

TABLE 29: A COMPARISON (BY RANK ORDER) OF THE FREQUENCY WITH WHICH MEN AND WOMEN USE THE SIX DIFFERENT COPING STRATEGIES

	Males	Females
Rational task-oriented behaviour	1	1
Put things into perspective	2	3
Adopt a conservative approach to teaching	3	4
Utilise colleague support	4	2
Become less involved	5	5
Attempt to ride out the situation	6	6

Another finding comes from dividing the sample into those teachers with more than three years' service and those with less. The frequency with which the six coping strategies were used by the two groups were compared (**Table 30**) and the only difference to emerge was that teachers with less experience made more frequent use of colleague support, whereas the more experienced teachers appeared to make more frequent use of putting things into perspective. These results, obviously a function of age and the pressures faced, indicate an interesting difference in coping behaviours and, perhaps, the emotional cost of teaching experienced by those not long out of teachers college.

TABLE 30: A COMPARISON (BY RANK ORDER) OF THE FREQUENCY WITH WHICH MORE AND LESS EXPERIENCED TEACHERS USE THE SIX DIFFERENT COPING STRATEGIES

	Less Than Three Years Certificated Service	**Beyond Three Years Certificated Service**
Rational task-oriented behaviour	1	1
Utilising colleague support	2	3
Putting things into perspective	3	2
Adopt a conservative approach to teaching	4	4
Become less involved	5	5
Attempt to ride out the situation	6	6

Coping, of course, does not take place in a vacuum. A point we have frequently stressed is that the sorts of strategies each of us uses and the frequency with which we use them, depend not only on the situations we face but also the emotional discomfort they cause us. The next step in the analysis was, therefore, to investigate the links between the different stressful situations outlined in the previous chapter and the coping strategies.

Coping strategies are initiated at different times, depending on what stage we have reached in the stress sequence. The way we cope with the frequency of events may therefore be different from the sorts of coping strategies we use when we are dealing with the anxiety or tiredness generated by those events.

The results which follow look at a range of relationships and attempt to determine whether different strategies are used when coping is directed at the frequency of the events or at the emotional discomfort created by anxiety and tiredness. It is important to view these results with some caution. This is because we are trying to understand the entire process each of us goes through, by looking at only one point in that process.

It is also important to bear in mind that we have chosen to present the relationships in terms of the frequency with which a coping strategy is used - and thus little attention has been directed towards how effective the different coping strategies are in different situations.

We have limited our discussion to a number of the more interesting findings. Because work overload occurs frequently and results in anxiety and tiredness, let us look first at the different coping strategies used to deal with this situation.

Remember, we are looking at three things - the sorts of coping strategies we use the more frequently the situation occurs; the coping strategies used when we experience **anxiety associated with work overload**; and coping strategies used when we experience the **tiredness that comes with work overload**. Each time, only the significant associations are mentioned:

-- The more frequently work overload is experienced, the more often colleague support is sought. This relationship could be explained by arguing that as many overload situations are accepted as being part of the job, perhaps the only way to cope is to complain to your colleagues or get reassurance from them that they feel the same way.

-- A different coping strategy is adopted when dealing with the anxiety generated by overload situations. In this case, the greater the anxiety associated with work overload, the more frequently use is made of rational task-oriented behaviour. Perhaps this is because being well organised, planning and establishing routines and thinking objectively about the situation is more appropriate in these circumstances.

-- Two strategies frequently used to cope with fatigue associated with work overload are: seeking support from colleagues and putting things into perspective. Again, perhaps there is little alternative.

What is important is that from the example of work overload, it is possible to show that we initiate different coping strategies depending on whether it is the **frequency** of the event we are dealing with, or the **emotional discomfort** associated with that event.

The relationships between the six different coping strategies and the frequency of and anxiety and tiredness caused by the different work stressors are expressed in **Table 31.**

TABLE 31: COPING STYLES MOST USED FOR DEALING WITH COMMON SOURCES OF STRESS

Coping Strategies:

1 Take a task-oriented approach
2 Adopt a conservative approach
3 Utilise colleague support
4 Put things into perspective
5 Become less involved
6 Attempt to ride out the situation

	For Frequency	For Anxiety	For Tiredness
Work overload	3	1	3,4
Expectations of parents and others	3,4	3,4	3
Relationships in the classroom	2,3,4	3,4	3,4,5
Unsupportive parents with difficult children	2,4	3	3,4
Physical aspects	1,2,3,6	2,3,4,5	2,3
Little individual control over different school events*	*	3,4,5	3,4,5

* **Respondents did not indicate a particular coping style they used frequently to deal with situations in this group.**

As you peruse the different diagrams, note the more frequently the situation of *"unsupportive parents and difficult children"* is experienced, the more frequently use is made of *"adopting a more conservative approach to teaching"* and *"putting* *things into perspective"*.

Similarly, in dealing with social relationships in the classroom, teachers frequently adopted a more conservative approach to teaching, utilised colleague support and put things into perspective.

No active coping strategies were associated with situations where teachers felt they had little individual control over a school event, irrespective of how frequently it occurred. This latter finding supports the suggestion that where we perceive we have little control over events, some form of palliative coping may be the best alternative. In fact this is exactly what appeared to be happening. When dealing with the anxiety associated with such a situation, frequent use was made of colleague support, putting things into perspective and just riding out the situation.

All these examples point to the fact in many situations we frequently use a number of coping strategies, in such a way that each strategy supports the others.

Finally, these preliminary investigations suggest a clear pattern of coping responses associated with feelings of tiredness - irrespective of their source. For example, coping strategies that utilise colleague support or put things into perspective were almost always associated with tiredness. The similarity of coping strategies for both tiredness and anxiety may indicate they are more frequently experienced together, or follow one another, and thus are dealt with in much the same way.

Conclusions

From the main survey, it has been possible to identify the 10 individual coping strategies that are most frequently used by teachers and six different *"coping styles"* which represent a clutch of like strategies.

It is important to remember a number of limitations associated with the *"self-report"* technique used throughout this research. For example, the research techniques used have not been able to include coping strategies of an anti-social nature, simply because the respondents were not prepared to talk about them. Also those techniques each of us uses unconsciously are not necessarily included in the checklist, because we are usually unaware that we use them.

It is also important to keep in mind that *"to cope"* means to deal successfully with a situation. When teachers were asked to talk about *"how they coped"*, then generally they discussed successful strategies. Thus ineffective strategies are not necessarily included in the checklist. Nevertheless, the results point to a number of important facts.

The first concerns the identification of a number of palliative techniques that teachers use to reduce emotional discomfort, rather than to alter the source of that discomfort. The typical social requirement for dealing with work-related stress is to emphasise the problem-solving (direct action) approach, and palliative approaches have thus been regarded as *"second best methods"* (Roskins and Lazarus, 1980).

Yet there are situations, particularly in schools where the teacher finds it difficult if not impossible to deal directly with the source of stress, where the most effective strategy is one that attempts to regulate or dissipate the emotional discomfort. In fact, trying to solve the problem by direct confrontation may make things worse. Therefore we should recognise that palliative strategies are an important part of our coping repertoire, and not take a negative view towards using them.

While it has been possible to identify six coping styles, these should not be regarded as a *"coping hierarchy"*. In other words, it should not be assumed that in all situations we follow a set pattern beginning with some rational task-oriented behaviour and then (depending on the success or otherwise of the strategy) turn to other, unspecified coping activities.

It is generally agreed that in dealing with a stressful situation, we make two appraisals (Lazarus, 1964; Folkman, 1982). The first, described as the primary appraisal, is concerned with what is at stake. The secondary appraisal asks: *"What can we do about it?"* Coping depends on how we appraise the situation, and it appears likely that the more control we perceive we have over the situation, the more likely we are to use problem-solving (direct action) strategies. If the situation is appraised as offering little or no control, then it is more likely that palliative coping will be initiated (Folkman, 1982).

Remember, coping is a **process** and therefore takes time; whether we decide to use a strategy that attempts to solve the problem, or one that will regulate its emotional impact on us, will depend on what stage of the process we are at.

Problem-solving techniques may reduce the emotional discomfort, and palliatives can, if effective, make the individual better able to initiate some problem-solving technique. Strategies can be used simultaneously or in support of each other. Past experience, and expectations about what will happen in the future, may influence whether we decide to use a particular strategy or not. Direct action strategies do not necessarily solve problems - and some palliatives might not in fact make one feel better. Coping involves complex patterns of actions related to past and present events and future expectations.

While no attempt has been made to determine effectiveness of the various coping strategies we have identified, it is important to ask yourself at least two questions - *"Effectiveness for whom? At what cost?"* (Lazarus, 1978). If emotional discomfort is reduced, but at the expense of family or work satisfaction - is that effective coping? If direct action techniques solve the problem (e.g. working harder and longer), but contribute to a deterioration in health - is that effective coping?

Often enough, stress from work spills over into our non-working lives, frequently interfering with family, social and leisure relationships. Bringing stress home can put others under stress. Rather than giving you the support you need, family members may have to cope with the difficulties of the situation and consequently become stressed themselves. Likewise, what goes on away from work influences how we feel and what we do at work.

The final issue involves how to intervene. It is important to be aware of the distinction between organisational intervention and individual actions. In the main, organisational intervention consists of techniques which help to develop a supportive climate within which individuals can cope constructively. Yet it would seem that unless we know the specific techniques teachers use, or would like to use, to cope with work stress, organisational interventions can only be of a very general nature.

This research has established a number of specific techniques teachers use to cope with stress. In particular, it has identified a complex range of palliative strategies which do little to actually solve the problem. It is important therefore to be aware of this type of strategy and the conditions necessary for its use. There is not much advantage to the teacher having as part of his or her repertoire a number of palliatives if s/he cannot use them.

Throughout this chapter, a number of techniques teachers use for coping with stress have been described and discussed. No one technique has been favoured over another nor has a prescription been offered that emphasises a *"best way"* of coping. The aim of the chapter has been to encourage teachers to become aware of a variety of different approaches to coping with stress, which they can explore, investigate and discuss with colleagues.

The purpose of increasing our awareness of these approaches is to increase our ability to select ones that are relevant to our particular situation and thereby to manage our stress more effectively. Sharing information with each other, and remembering that most of the stress we experience comes not from the situation we are facing or from our emotional response to it, but from how we cope, will help us to achieve that purpose.

CHAPTER 7: SPEAKING FRANKLY

Two personal views of the stresses experienced as a teacher are given in this chapter. The first view is that of a young teacher in her first job. The second, which represents a senior teacher's viewpoint, raises some of the concerns teachers face when, in addition to classroom responsibilities, their job demands administrative and managerial skills.

The points that concern both teachers are typical of those made by the teachers who took part in the research project, as are the coping strategies they use. Since the comments and answers of the project's respondents have become *"statistics"* in this report, it is perhaps appropriate to use the following personal accounts to express some of the typical concerns. For many people, it is easier to identify with problems and experiences when they are expressed in a direct and personal way than when they are reduced to items in a table.

I hope, therefore, that these personal accounts will provide a means by which the statistical presentation of the research findings can become more accessible. The frank and honest way in which both teachers share their experiences should also have considerable supportive value for those who have faced, or are facing, similar situations.

QUOTED FROM A YOUNG TEACHER'S VIEWPOINT

Teaching is a exacting profession, dealing with people. The many demands on a teacher in a classroom situation mean that there is great potential for stress.

I think the following three pieces of advice would have reduced the level of stress I experienced as a new teacher, especially in the first few months of my career: (1) understand what stress is; (2) realise that every teacher will have to face stress and therefore should be prepared to recognise the signs; (3) realise that stress is not *"abnormal"* or *"bad"* or *"sinful"* or *"wrong"* - and should be accepted when it does occur.

I remember only too well my initial feelings when signs of this dreaded *"lurgy"* (stress) began to plague me. I had feelings of personal failure, professional failure and total inadequacy. No provision had been made in my training to warn me about stress. I did not fully recognise it when it first occurred and - what's more to the point really - if I did have some recognition, I did not accept or admit what was occurring. And why not? Well, of course, stress meant:

- I lacked the ability to cope.;
- My programme was not of a high enough standard in planning, organisation, efficiency and effectiveness.
- I did not have enough know-how to work particular situations out.

It meant, in sum total, I was hopeless - inadequate - a failure!

The young teacher's dilemma

So, what did I do? Well, naturally, I would not admit my feelings to anyone on a professional level. I couldn't! I didn't know if it was *"professional"* to do so. I didn't know what standards were acceptable in this area. I mean, what was normal? What was acceptable? I didn't know. These thoughts and queries were new to me. Having no solutions, I just continued to battle through in my unsure state of apparent *"abnormality"*. Well, that was how I saw it at the time, anyway. This may sound pretty heavy and rather too emotional, but I can assure you it is a totally realistic sum-up of the situation I encountered at the time.

It is, I feel sure, of the utmost importance to recognise that stress is an integral part of teaching (in differing degrees for different people at different phases of their careers, of course). But nevertheless, stress does and will occur.

This acceptance of stress in my early career was an issue I battled with. Had I been prepared for it, more energy could have been spent in those first few precious months in seeking, thinking through and actioning procedures for coping with the causes (i.e. the stressors) directly related to the classroom environment, and more specifically, to coping with the children.

Sorting out the causes

So, having identified and accepted that stress will occur, the next important step is to determine what exactly is causing the stress.

Many factors cause stress in the teaching profession. Of course, at varying phases of experience and training within the profession, differing factors would be more obvious (e.g. a head teacher would encounter a set of stressors somewhat different from those a senior teacher would encounter, and theirs would be different again to those a year-one or year-two teacher would experience). I will attempt to discuss the types of stressors a young, new teacher may encounter, as this pertains directly to my own experiences.

Before I move on, a definition of what I see stress as being, would be appropriate. I would define stress as *"internal and external pressure upon an individual"*. Let me differentiate between these internal and external pressures, and discuss each in terms of how they affected me and the strategies I used to cope.

Internal stressors are directly related to oneself and stem from unrealistic ideals and standards of performance of self and lack of balance in one's personal life. In my own experience, these two stressors have brought about much frustration and - to be quite honest - physical, emotional and mental exhaustion.

Unrealistic expectations

As a new teacher, I tended to set standards I could not reach. As a year-one, I was uncertain as to what was expected of me by the principal and other teachers, and those in the wider area (e.g. inspectors, education board). How much or how little was I expected to do? So, I set my own standards. Many of these were quite impracticable. Soon I became a *"workaholic"* - often working from 7.30am to 5.30pm daily, then taking work home to do at night, as well as working in the weekends.

The frustration and stress came from the realisation that no matter how much I did, I just could never seem to finish. As a teacher, one's work is never finished. There is always something to be done and if you look hard for it, you'll find it all right. I lived, slept, worked, and ate teaching.

How did I cope with all this? I remember only too well those days when I would rush home and collapse in a heap of tears on my bedroom floor. I also remember only too well those endless nights of very little sleep when I would lie awake, not being able to find a release for my tension.

I look back now and see how totally unnecessary my actions and thoughts were at the time. Once I finally realised that I was not the *"be all and end all"* of my class, of my school or indeed of the teaching profession; that my class would not die, crash, fall, if I took some time off; and that it was totally unrealistic of me to think that I was to teach every child to perfection or near perfection in every subject - I was then able to relax and enjoy my career.

As a new teacher, then, one has to accept that *"perfection"* is not reality - a hard but nevertheless vital lesson. One, too, needs to develop the ability to leave one's work at school and take up after-hours involvement in activities that can bring fulfilment and satisfaction outside the classroom. These include hobbies, sport, leisure activities, religious activities, and so on. One also needs to keep up with friends outside the teaching circle. People who don't talk about school are interesting, too! This comment brings me to the other main internal stressor - lack of balance in one's personal life. An important aspect of maintaining this balance is giving proper attention to one's physical well-being.

Health care is important

In their efforts to cope with classroom pressures, many teachers forget about their physical well-being, and many have suffered poor health and sickness in consequence. Teachers catch many germs from the kids. I had so many colds, flu (I even lost my voice), and had my first major headaches when I started out. What agony! Often these sicknesses were self-inflicted - by this I mean, I did not take time out to give myself a chance to recuperate from whatever was plaguing me at the time, so the problems accumulated until my body could no longer cope and I would come down with an almighty crash.

An important aspect of coping with this stressor is to accept that sickness will occur, recognise associated alarms the body gives, and to take time out to recover fully. It is not good to allow the situation to get to the *"can't cope"* stage, indeed this can be quite dangerous. I tended to think my classroom couldn't run smoothly without me there, that my kids would not be able to handle the insecurities of having another teacher with different disciplinary routines and techniques; and often this was true. The antics some of my children got up to when a reliever came into the classroom were, at times, eye-opening and embarrassing. However, one has to be realistic. Let's face it, a sick teacher can't cope much better either, though we might try to deceive ourselves into believing we can.

As I mentioned earlier, illness in my own experience was often self-induced. It was due to my own unwillingness to accept initial bodily alarm systems and warnings; as a result, the illness would escalate. It was also due to an inadequate diet - not eating healthy nutritious meals, often because I was *"too busy"* to eat.

A third cause was inadequate exercise and, more importantly, lack of adequate rest. I couldn't believe the exhaustion I experienced at first. I had to change my lifestyle completely. It has nearly taken a whole year and I am still learning (often the hard way) to get into the early night routine, but it is a *"must"* in order to get enough sleep.

It is so important to take care of your health - believe me I know, I learned the hard way!

The young teacher and the class

Many external stressors pertain directly to relationships in the classroom. Frequently they stem from unrealistic ideals and standards of performance from children. At times maybe, we tend to set goals for ourselves and for the children that are far too high. Well, I know I did, anyway. I put much time into planning a particular unit or series of lessons, only to find later that the content and activities were too difficult for the children. They could not cope with the work at all, let alone achieve a reasonable standard.

Consequently, I would become frustrated and angry.

I soon came to the realisation that high academic standards were not within the capability of some of the children. This is not to say that one should set low standards, but rather that work should challenge children at a level just above, but within reach of, their potential. Likewise, one should set realistic behavioural standards.

But how does a new teacher find this out? Well, for me it was often a process of trial and error; however, senior teachers and professional colleagues can be called upon. I only wish I had had more time during my training to work with each level of children. Twenty-two weeks out of twenty-three years is just not long enough to equip the young teacher with the know-how related to standards of performance and expectations associated with the range of age levels in the primary school.

Another frequent external stressor is behavioural problems. Here are a list of day-to-day problems I've encountered. I'm sure many will sound familiar. Children that are:

-- not listening to instructions;
-- not accepting my authority (and as a result defying or attempting to defy, rules and set boundaries);
-- using foul language;
-- displaying bad manners;
-- fighting or arguing;
-- late or truant;
-- demanding attention in different ways;
-- noisy.

I feel it is the combination of these problems that causes a noticeable amount of stress in my day-to-day work. If we have to deal with only one or two or even maybe three, we cope quite ably; but it is the combination - not just every now and then, but consistently, day after day - that causes the pressure. Sometimes several have to be dealt with at a time, several within five minutes, several within 10 minutes, half an hour, an hour, and so on.

This is especially so during the first term and first few weeks of the second and third terms, these being times when the teacher needs to establish disciplinary routines and techniques within the classroom, when rules are outlined, and when work habits are stipulated. I have found in my classes, however, that these areas need to be continually and consistently revised and reinforced. After a time, this gets to you. I have often found myself muttering to myself and to others, *"Why can't they understand - they should surely know what to do by now - I'm sick of repeating myself - I get sick of my own voice - am I getting anywhere?"*

To give some classroom examples - it is six months into the year, and even so, I have to continually remind three boys to take their pencils and reading books to reading with them when they go (they have remedial work). I have to consistently revise the classroom rules on good manners, politeness and respect for one another's being and one another's property. I have continually to sit upon some children to ensure they are working at their desks. It's the little things that tend to get you down, such as the child who had his lunch stolen because he failed to put his lunch in the lunch box - which is what he's been doing every day this year! Yes, sometimes it does want to make you pull your hair out! The situations may seem so trivial, yet they are so very much the reality of classroom teaching.

I regard the following as essential for minimising classroom-related stress:

- Be well organised and plan in advance (I normally do my planning for the week on the Thursday and Friday of the previous week. E.g. When do you build a fire engine? Before a fire?/After a fire?/or During a fire? Children are perceptive enough to realise when you haven't got things under control, and when you haven't got things organised and planned);
- Establish set routines, working procedures and methods in the classroom - consistently reinforce these;
- Establish set rules and boundaries, stick to them and support them;
- Be fair, honest, sincere and consistent in disciplinary techniques and methods.
- Give praise and encouragement consistently for any good behaviour (kids just love certificates, stars, special jobs, oral rewards, visits to other teachers for praise - they can't get enough of it);
- Practise what is preached or taught - this is most important.

These may sound rather basic points, but I came to realise quite quickly that I had to run a tight ship with my children, one in which definite boundaries had to be set. My children needed to know these. They needed to have a sense of security and to know that when the boundaries were over-stepped, they would have to take the responsibility for their actions.

Whatever rules, routines, procedures of organisation are set, I can't stress enough how important it is that the teacher continually and consistently show support for them, always revising and reinforcing them. Children quickly notice if a teacher slips in one particular area, no matter how big or small, and will take their best shot at breaking through any holes in the tight net that the teacher has woven.

To be honest, there have been times when I have collapsed in a heap of tears to release my frustration. I also attribute much of my ability to cope in many of these situations to my personal Christian convictions and commitment. No matter what the situation, I will always search for a solution. I will not be satisfied with leaving the problem. I will search for a way of coping - even if the solution is not to be found immediately.

The young teacher and the parents

Another external stressor is lack of support from parents. I feel I can speak with a good deal of experience in this area.

The school at which I have begun my new career as a teacher is at the nucleus of a lower socio-economic area of the city. The area has a large amount of emotional, physical, intellectual and moral insecurity and instability (e.g. broken homes, solo parents, de facto relationships, violent parental figures, homes with much financial difficulty).

Some of the parents of the children I teach show little sign of having their heads, hearts, and houses - in other words, their lives - together, and show little support for the school or their child's education. Many seem to feel too inadequate or too insecure to offer support.

How can teachers expect children to have their acts together, if their parents (ideally their model of security and stability) aren't coping? I'm a firm believer that a child strongly reflects the background from which she or he comes.

How can we expect children to automatically respect others' property when, at home, their property or their *"headspace"* is not even considered?

How can children who constantly hear their parents swearing be expected to automatically speak with clear, decent, correct English?

How can a young boy whose rights are encroached upon be expected to automatically turn the other cheek when his father has brought him up with the value *"only the strongest survives, son", "fight for your rights", "stick up for yourself in any situation where you feel injustice is being done to you"?*

How can a girl be expected to read her book and spell her words for homework every night, if her parents don't care?

It is necessary that a teacher consider these aspects when establishing methods of routine, discipline and procedure within the classroom. In a heated situation, a teacher needs to think (before speaking, acting or reacting) of the possible causes and consequences. A young teacher needs to develop compassion, empathy, and understanding for and of the different lifestyles from which children come and the associated circumstances that cause children to think, act and react in certain ways. Sure, one may not always be able to identify with a child, but one can have a go at understanding.

It certainly releases a lot of the pressure on you when in a difficult situation, you realise that the child you are dealing with thinks totally differently from the way you do. His or her thought patterns, actions, reactions, emotions, values can be quite unlike your own.

Coping with cultural barriers

As a European teacher - bought up in a middle-class, white-oriented family environment, with an associated middle-class, white-oriented ideology - I've had to learn to adjust and compromise in certain classroom standards that I have set. Many of the children I have taught and am now teaching (e.g. Maori, Samoan and other Polynesian children), come from a home environment which transmits cultural patterns different from, and often not conducive to, optimal development and competence in the types of learning characteristic of a white, middle-class-oriented classroom. (Phew, that was a long-winded sentence!)

It is important for teachers in multi-cultural schools to realise that their cultural patterns, values, knowledge, experiences and skills, having been instilled by their own family background, will not always be the right set of solutions in a given situation. This is not to say that you abandon your standards. There is wisdom and balance. I may have over-emphasised the point to make sure it got across.

Of course, there are certain standards that I will not lower (e.g. no foul language, respect for other people's property, good manners), but what I am saying is that you consider the particular child you are dealing with, his or her background and culture, and deal with the situation justly in the light of these factors.

I personally do not allow swearing, but I am careful how I deal with it. I try not to explode or come down hard on a child who has been told once or twice, and is now really trying hard to improve, but accidentally lets a swear word slip out. I discuss the child's reaction. It is an automatic response, I realise. I ask myself why the child did it, what influenced him or her and, what will be the consequences of a certain course of action. This may be different with different children and in different situations.

The young teacher and senior colleagues

I have been left very much alone as a new teacher. Being fairly independent, I have appreciated this. Sure, in many ways I had to learn to cope with situations the *"hard way"*, but nevertheless I found this a valuable experience. I am hesitant about commenting on whether the lack of support was a good or bad thing. I guess it depends on personality. For me, I think it was a good thing.

While a new teacher does not want to feel forgotten about, the opposite has as many disadvantages. Pressure from senior teachers as to how you should run your class; other teachers' interference in the way you are dealing with children; and pressure to follow directions from senior teachers, even though you disagree with them, can all create stress. I know I could not have coped with these situations, but just as I have preferred independence, others may find that hard to cope with. (Once again, I guess it's all a matter of balance.)

Time management

I think some teachers waste time, others don't give enough time to the job at hand, while others give too much time. Normally, this is not an area that concerns me as I have learned to discipline myself to work effectively and efficiently within the boundaries of time that are available (I've learned this the hard way, I might add). I've learned to work a good eight-hour day, 8 o'clock in the morning till 5.30pm, five days a week, and to get done what I have needed to do within that time - those are the hours that I'm paid for, why not work them?

However, I will admit the pressure of time can be stressful at certain stages of the year. These are - yes, you guessed - report time, interview time, p. and a. register time, record time, and returns time. I have found these add pressure, as they seem to arrive all at once. There are too many things to do in a given time.

Discipline in one's activities, one's time and indeed one's life is a great help in managing time effectively. However, I still experience pressure. I can't say I've actually found a perfect coping strategy, but I have gained added strength from my personal faith; and I would like to suggest to the educational authorities that they think seriously about spreading the workload over the whole year.

Is teacher training relevant enough?

Speaking of the workload imbalance brings me to a discussion of inadequacies in the teaching profession. But where does one start in such a discussion? I'm sure that no matter what staffroom one walks into, the main topic of conversation may well revolve around this. It is, of course, difficult to comment publicly on a problem without putting oneself in a vulnerable situation. But if it means that the pressure with which new teachers have to cope is lessened, then I must comment. It is also necessary to say that I have spent time talking to, and sharing my experiences with, other young teachers facing a new career. What I have written reflects their sentiments, too.

First, I would like to pick up from where I left off in my introduction - that is - the recognition, preparation for, identification, acceptance and admission of the concept and occurrence of stress as an integral part of the teaching profession. I outlined the problem earlier, but gave no solution.

I think, however, that it would be most beneficial for training programmes to include time for discussion of practical experiences directly related to the emotional/personal aspect of teaching. The whole concept of stress needs to be openly shared and discussed (what it is, how it is caused, and how to cope with it). Realistic situations that occur in teaching could be role played and student teachers could discuss related ideas, outcomes, and effects. Practising teachers could act as mediators, initiators and guiders in these practical sessions.

I think that, on the whole, time needs to be given to discuss the experiences, satisfactions and dissatisfactions the new teacher is likely to encounter. Such a discussion should also focus on internal aspects (emotions, feelings, thoughts, and attitudes that may be experienced in a variety of classroom situations). These aspects were not discussed during my training. Had they been dealt with, my first year of teaching may not have been the traumatic time it was.

There are a few other ways in which my training did not adequately prepare me for my profession. For example, although college provided me with easy solutions to problem situations, I found that there are no easy solutions in reality. Teachers college training was based, both theoretically and practically, on teaching so-called middle-class or average groups.

In our reading programme, for example, we were taught to cater for three reading groups; in our maths programme, for one or two groups. How unrealistic! I ended up with five reading groups in my first year and six in my second, and three maths groups both years. This was due to an incredibly wide ability range within my classes. It was at first a real hit-and-miss affair to establish the most suitable programme in these areas. Of course, this would not be so in every school in New Zealand; nevertheless, I think the point is worth making.

Often, how I coped was also a hit-and-miss affair. Personal beliefs and releasing emotion helped. I'm sure we all are aware of the cultural and racial mix in schools, but something more than simple awareness is needed. If teachers colleges would offer one class in which student teachers are faced with and discuss the **realities** (e.g. behavioural problems) of a multi-cultural multi-level classroom situation, this would help.

Children's behaviour was an area where I experienced a big gap between theory and reality when it came to solving problems. Teachers college offered this solution: put the children on a contract system and bad behaviour will miraculously disappear; or if behaviour is too much to cope with, there will more than likely be an adjustment class and the problem child, having visited it, will return to you a perfect citizen.

In the classroom, I kept on trying every method I could think of. Yes, the problem could be modified and sometimes removed - but this was only after much sweat and tears. It was hard work and was worked through over a long term; it was not a short-term *"now you see it, now you don't"* situation.

I can honestly say no provision was made to give me any guidance in handling the problem of irate or difficult parents. Dealing with such parents is a tricky situation, and I was left feeling quite hopeless and inadequate as a teacher.

I cannot emphasise too strongly the need for teachers colleges to face up to the realities of practical classroom teaching, and to prepare students. One suggestion that could be worth trying would be to include in the drama course (which is a part of Fundamental English), a section relating to real-life teaching. This could include role playing of conflict situations between teacher-child; teacher-parent; and, furthermore, teacher-teacher.

Other aspects of the teaching profession that cause me stress include:

-- **insecurity of job/position** - A very real and unsettling problem but one which it doesn't pay to lose sleep, weight, or precious time over. I cope by not dwelling on this aspect. The more positive alternative for me is to tell myself that, when the time comes to find another position - and it'll come soon enough - then I'll deal with it. My personal beliefs are also a great support.

-- **the lack of in-service training opportunities** - At times this gets me really uptight but, once again, it's not worth losing sleep over. I've found it best to look on the positive side and be appreciative of, and make do with, what I've got. I think of those worse off than me, which usually gives me a good jolt out of self-pity.

The pay-offs

Finally, I have asked myself: *"Is it all worthwhile?"* I have found my answer in situations like the following example.

I have an eight-year-old girl in my class, who is not a behavioural problem at all - a neat kid, really lovely - lovely family life. Her problem has been that she tends to be a perfectionist - she would not try things for fear that she wouldn't/couldn't succeed. I spent time with her individually, just a few minutes each day, helping and praising her in printing, reading, story-time. This worked perfectly. She now has the most beautiful printing and interesting stories in the class. She does extra work for me at home, enjoys school, appreciates all that I do for her or for the class (and so do her parents - which is most gratifying - their thanks meant a lot). Is it worthwhile being a teacher? Yes, extremely so!

QUOTED FROM A SENIOR TEACHER'S VIEWPOINT

Resourcefulness, resilience, diplomacy, sensitivity, and unflagging energy are all qualities senior teachers determined to do their jobs well constantly need to call on. Few of us, however, have these in the abundance we would like. The gap between the ideal and the human reality results in inevitable stress. I have used the term *"senior teacher"*, but teachers at any stage of their career will probably recognise just how valuable these qualities are. Likewise, although in this account, my first concern is with the problems faced by senior teachers (and with possible solutions to those problems), I hope that others will also find something that is useful or relevant to their own situation.

Roles and expectations

Changing expectations of the various roles of the senior teacher in a school can be the cause of uncertainty and, sometimes, of conflict. To deal with the stress that often results, senior teachers need to find ways to take control of the sources of stress that can be changed, and to manage their own responses to the stress that can't be avoided. They also need to develop the flexibility and tolerance that is needed by anyone in a management role.

The ways in which some senior teachers are working together with their principals and staff to sort out their roles and to build effective and supportive teams are described in this account. The incidents and situations I have reported are either from my own experience, or have been told to me by other senior teachers. I have altered names to avoid identifying schools or people.

The deputy principals and senior teachers I talked with are in city schools at present, and have been involved in educational administration and management courses. Their experiences and expectations will not be exactly the same as those of all senior teachers, but I hope that others will still recognise the sources of stress and ways of dealing with them that are described here:

-- A six-year-old comes up to a new deputy principal in the playground, with a word of advice: *"Mrs. Jones, you don't really know how to be a deputy principal, do you? Don't you know you're supposed to go 'round shouting at people at lunchtime!"*

-- *"My principal is keen to get more involvement of parents in our school, but the teachers are wary. They think it might mean parents interfering with their professional roles. The principal wants me to help win over the teachers and then see that his plans are implemented. The teachers feel I should represent their point of view to the principal and make a stand for their rights; whatever I do, one lot or the other will feel I've let them down."*

-- *"But when Mr. Brown was our deputy principal, we always sent any naughty children to him to deal with and didn't have to bother with them ourselves. He really supported us that way - isn't it your job to do that for us too?"*

-- *"This school's policy is to put A-C rankings on the children's reports. Personally, I believe this practice is useless and even harmful. But I have to support it as school policy and help teachers do the exercise accurately. My next job is to try to persuade the principal that it's time we reassessed this policy."*

-- *"I can't take my elective group to sketch historic places outside the school grounds because I'm needed around the school to make sure all the other electives are running smoothly."*

-- *"I tried to ask the DP for help before school, but it's hopeless - there's always such a queue of teachers and parents waiting to talk to her, as well as her class. She wouldn't have time for my worries."*

-- *"One of the teachers I'm responsible for is having a lot of problems with control. Confrontations always seem to escalate so needlessly. I think I could help him if only I could be in his classroom and see for myself what he's doing that allows this. But I have no release time, and can't leave my class to go and be with him."*

-- *"People expect me to be a super-teacher - and I expect it of myself too. But no matter how hard I work, I never feel I'm satisfied with the results."*

Some of the causes of stress for senior teachers and especially for deputy principals are illustrated in these comments. All suggest a conflict of roles.

One kind of conflict occurs when the expectations of the senior teacher are somewhat different from those of the principal or other teachers. Some senior teachers, for example those who have been involved in management courses, expect to share with the principal some of the responsibility for decision making and leadership in the school. They may also expect to help supervise the professional development of other teachers. They sometimes find that these expectations are not shared by others in their own school.

Another, and probably even more common kind of conflict of roles for senior teachers, comes from the sheer number of different jobs that have to be done, all at the same time.

Many senior teachers find they can begin to deal actively with these problems when they are able to recognise the conflicting expectations that go with the job, negotiate with their principal and with other teachers to establish a role that is realistic and that they can live with, and then define the scope of that role clearly to everyone else involved. Mutual support among the staff can then be offered and received.

The middle management dilemma

Even after this process has been gone through, the conflicts and uncertainties inherent in a senior teacher's job will not have gone away - the role of middle management in any organisation is never an entirely comfortable one.

-- *"Mrs. Marsh, please see that the teachers understand their playground duties and carry them out properly. The lower ground is being neglected."*

-- *"Can't you make the principal understand that it's just not possible to patrol the lower playground before school and supervise our own classrooms, too!"*

A principal may see a deputy as being the second in command, who will loyally represent policy to the rest of the staff and see that it is implemented. The teachers, on the other hand, may see the deputy principal as a friend in court, as one of themselves who can put their point of view to the principal, intercede on their behalf, and also protect them from any unreasonable demands or reprimands.

The deputy principal is often in the role of confidante of both the principal and teachers and needs to find ways to interpret the point of view of each to the other without indiscreetly betraying confidences.

These roles of mediator, interpreter and buffer may be highlighted in schools with a rigidly hierarchical structure. For some teachers, this clear-cut chain of command offers a security that reduces stress. They know where they stand. Others, however, are reluctant to be seen as the heavy for the principal and instead feel more comfortable taking the teacher's side.

Middle managers who try to steer an independent course, to be flexible enough to make up their mind on each issue and decide where to put their weight according to their beliefs, will need to be prepared for continual pressures and uncertainties as the principal and the various groups of teachers try to enlist their support. If they do not prove to be a source of strength and a valued ally to either the principal or the teachers, they may be simply ignored. If this happens, the stress may be reduced, but so too will the satisfaction of being a useful and influential member of the team.

The positive aspects of the middle management role can be used to advantage by senior teachers if the tone of staff meetings is open and supportive enough to allow any conflicts causing undue stress to be brought into the open, acknowledged and dealt with by the staff as a whole. Senior teachers can take a lead in this, as well as in promoting initiatives and projects that will benefit the entire school.

The stresses associated with being the person in the middle will be much less in a school where the principal and the teachers have a mutual regard for each other; where there is a commonly held set of goals; where communication channels are open both ways; and where the principal, senior staff and teachers work together as a team. Ultimately, the most profitable way for a deputy principal to deal with these sources of stress will be to work towards a cooperative and productive climate in the school.

The principal and the deputy

Sometimes a principal and deputy manage to work as a team, sharing responsibility harmoniously. For this kind of partnership to work, however, the principal needs to feel secure and not threatened by a younger and possibly more knowledgeable deputy. And the deputy needs to be sensitive enough to support the principal's mana.

-- *"I'm philosophically opposed to prefect systems, but when I came to this school I found that not only did the principal believe in them, but as deputy principal I was in charge of the prefects!"*

-- *"In my last school I took a lot of responsibility for staff training and think I have plenty of ideas and experience to offer. I'd love to take it on here too. But my principal thinks staff training is what happens one day a year when he organises the inservice day. Staff meetings are just to hand out instructions on administrative matters. I feel totally frustrated."*

One fortunate deputy principal, a man, reported that he had once had a principal who told him on arrival at the school, *"I see it as my job to train you for the role of principal"*. This deputy principal was then regularly given the chance to learn and practise all aspects of school administration under the tutorship of a skilled principal. Female deputy principals sometimes feel they are less likely to be considered as potential principals.

Stress arising from the relationship between the principal and the deputy seems to centre either on philosophical differences or on the sharing of the leadership role. Deputy principals with strong views about educational aims and methods will find it very difficult to be expected to implement policies they do not agree with, and still maintain their integrity. Having to behave in ways that are inconsistent with personal beliefs is likely to cause stress and diminish self-esteem. *"Just carrying out orders"* is not a role New Zealand teachers take to comfortably.

Some deputy principals feel that, compared with their principals, they have more energy, more enthusiasm, and more up-to-date training in management as well as in teaching. Some find little evidence in the principal's actions of the benefits of long experience. The ambition of many deputies to become principals themselves is thwarted with the bottleneck in the supply of principals' jobs in the 1980s.

Disappointment and even resentment at limited opportunities to put their ideas and energy to work as principals may cause many deputies unavoidable stress. Some are tempted to build a power base for themselves in the school, either in opposition to the principals, or simply to ignore their principals.

There are several more constructive options, however, which may be practicable, depending on the cooperation of the principal. One way is for deputies to approach their principals openly, describing their frustration and asking for a chance to learn more about the administration of the school. They can try to convince their principals that they have skills to offer the school and would like to share more of the responsibilities and take more part in decision making and policy formation.

Another strategy - one that is not easy to achieve - is to try unobtrusively to educate the principals so they will feel happier about sharing their power. One deputy principal who has been very involved in management training but who has so far been unsuccessful in winning recognition in her own school, commented sadly, *"It looks as if my fate is to just train principals without ever having the chance to be one myself."* This woman continually works to suggest ideas and procedures to her principal to strengthen her school, all the time supporting him and allowing her ideas to be presented as those of the principal.

Some deputies, of course, have no wish for more involvement in decision making.

They feel they have far too much to do already. For these people, the relationship with their principal is less likely to be a source of stress.

Whatever kind of working relationship is most appropriate between a principal and a deputy, the stress for both will be reduced if they have worked out together an accommodation of philosophies, and clarified what each expects of the other and where the areas of responsibilities are demarcated. This process will take time and will require a series of negotiations. If the principal does not take the initiative in this process, it may take courage for the deputy to ask for some form of professional development/consultation cycle. Courage will also be needed on the part of the principal, who may not be experienced in this negotiation of roles.

The pay-off in terms of professional growth and reduced stress was described by this deputy principal:

-- *"It took a long time for me and my principal to get around to having a series of talks about what our roles should be, but now that we've broken the barrier, we've learned so much about what each of us really wants to achieve and how we can help each other. Now we see each other as colleagues and not as rivals, and I don't resent her authority like I used to. We look forward to our professional development talks that are scheduled several times each term, but we find we talk a lot more informally to share our setbacks and successes, and give each other feedback and support."*

The senior teacher and the staff

Teachers have all sorts of expectations about ways a senior teacher should be helping them - handing out ready prepared units of work, relieving them of disruptive children, soothing difficult parents, keeping equipment and resources well organised, or just leaving them alone. Inevitably senior teachers will not have time to fulfil all these expectations. In trying to reduce the stress on other teachers, they feel frustrated, guilty, and suffer distress themselves.

-- *"I got so fed up with being constantly asked to make decisions on trivial things like whether lunch should be eaten outside or inside that day. The duty teacher could easily decide that herself."*

-- *"I'm interrupted in my class by a steady procession of naughty kids who've been told to come to me to get sorted out. I know it's my job to help other teachers with discipline, but I'm sure this isn't the way. I'd rather help them work out ways to cope with their kids themselves."*

-- *"I'm just not comfortable being part of a hierarchy."*

Communicating clearly about what roles are seen to be important is just as necessary between senior teachers and other teachers as it is with principals. Their roles can then be discussed and negotiated. Just as deputies may be able to share some of the principal's responsibilities, so they may find that they can enlist the help and expertise of other teachers more frequently instead of always looking to senior teachers.

If deputy principals want their principals to train them for future roles, they should also be prepared to train other teachers to become senior teachers by sharing jobs and power, offering support where it is needed.

Senior teachers, like any other leaders, need to adapt their leadership styles to the levels of professional maturity of the different teachers they are responsible for. Failure to do this will cause stress, as some teachers feel they get too much help and some too little. Some members of the team, not necessarily the first-year teachers, will need definite and firm guidelines, close supervision and frequent feedback about what is going well, what needs improvement, and how the senior teachers can help. Other teachers will function very well and continue to grow professionally with a looser and more colleagial relationship.

In order to judge what kind of supporting role is appropriate for each person in the team, senior teachers need to make time to really listen to other teachers talk about their work and how they see their children. The frustrations that result from not being able to find this necessary listening and discussing time is often a real source of stress.

One senior teacher said,

> -- *"We talked over this problem at a syndicate meeting that the principal was also invited to. I let everyone know I'll be in the staffroom from 8.15 to 8.30 each day if they want to talk with me. After 8.30, my children are my first priority. Besides that, my principal has arranged for me to have two hours a week release time to divide between my four teachers, according to what they need. We decided that I would go into their rooms at a time when their children are working quietly, or they would come into mine. We can talk, and in their room I can also observe the children and pick up information about how the programme seems to be going.*
>
> *I can also find opportunities to praise the kids and the teacher. We like a climate where we feel we can pop in and out of each other's rooms unobtrusively. Once a week, after school, we have a team meeting to plan work together or talk over some teaching problems. To prepare a big unit or discuss a difficult topic like evaluation, we sometimes have tea at my place and make an evening of it. We all enjoy that and feel the time put in is well worthwhile.*
>
> *Since we sorted out this system together, I find I can prevent problems getting worse. I can often see ways we can help each other and how we can know what to expect of each other. It's not nearly as stressful as the haphazard contacts we had before. It's almost as good as the open plan situation I enjoyed so much in my last school - that was really a model for cooperation and dealing with stress before it got bad."*

By opening lines of communication in this way, the foundations are laid for the team building that is one of the greatest satisfactions of being a senior teacher. Although most senior teachers feel frustrated by the conflicting demands of their own class and their other duties, there are real advantages in the team leader being seen to be one of the hard-working teaching team. The credibility that is earned in the eyes of other teachers enables the senior teacher to be more effective in building a team relationship.

Finding time for your own class

Senior teachers need to keep some control over the time they are called away from their children. They may need to negotiate with the principal and other teachers to make sure that interruptions are kept to a minimum -

> -- *"I've always enjoyed working with the children and get my greatest satisfactions from helping them learn. Now I feel so guilty when I can't give them my full attention. I often have to compromise and give them formal work to do while I'm out of the room. I know that it's good for them to be independent and also that they seem to think they have more status in the school because they're in my class and get lots of extra jobs to do around the school. They like that responsibility. But I still worry that they may be missing out by having me called out of the room so often."*

Children in one class, whose teacher was the deputy principal, one day counted twenty-one calls over the intercom for her to come to the office at the principal's request. This teacher, when she realised how bad the situation had gradually become, talked it over with the principal and worked out a better system. Times were set that were to be free of all interruptions except for emergencies. The deputy had to set aside time after school to sit and talk with the principal so he felt he was still in touch with her. This was difficult to arrange, but at least the deputy had taken some control of her problem, and in making a choice about which times to keep for the children and which to keep for the principal, managed to deal effectively with their conflicting demands and reduce the stress.

Some stress just won't go away - what then?

Some stress, however, seems to be unavoidable. No matter how skilfully a teacher plans, organises, communicates, negotiates and clarifies her/his role, there will still be many sources of stress that won't go away. Neither would we really want them to - a life without any stress - though tempting to wish for, would be dull, bland, unstimulating and unchallenging. What is important about the sources of stress that seem to be out of our control, is the way we respond to them. We have a choice of various ways to live with stress, and different people will use different strategies.

Support from other people

Teachers in single classrooms can feel very isolated. People in positions of authority may also feel reluctant to admit they have problems they need to talk over with someone. They sometimes feel they need to maintain an image of being totally capable. The most competent, however, are likely to feel secure enough to admit their own mistakes and difficulties and to ask for help.

One young teacher, when asked what she appreciated about her senior teacher, said,

> -- *"It's a help when she shares her own teaching mistakes. We can see she's human and it creates an atmosphere where you can admit your own mistakes and get help without feeling useless."*

Besides talking over problems with teachers in their own schools, many senior teachers have found real benefits from the contacts they make with other senior teachers - attending management courses together or through specially arranged gatherings where senior teachers meet to share experiences.

There's still life outside of school

Senior teachers can easily find that school begins to take over their whole life. Some even seem to want it that way. Teachers, as much as children, need and deserve a life outside the classroom. We need to accept that we will never be able to do all the things we think we should do. We need to make sure we have some leisure time for activities we enjoy - this may be simply time set aside to do absolutely nothing! By saving enough time and energy for family and friends, teachers are more likely to keep their relationships with children and other teachers in a healthy perspective.

Avoiding guilt about what we don't have time for

One deputy principal said,

> -- *"I used to lie awake at night worrying about all the things I hadn't been able to do that day and all the things I had to do the next day. I was afraid I'd*

forget to do something important. Then I hit on a device that is so simple and obvious I'm sure everyone except me is already doing it. Every evening, I write a list on a card of all the things I want to do the next day - people I want to speak with, and so on. Sometimes there are twenty or thirty items.

The point is that I know I won't be able to do it all, so I put them in rough order of priority. Somehow, by putting it in writing, I can let it go out of my mind and sleep a lot better. As I put the card into my bag for the morning, I feel I've put away my worries out of my mind and into that bag.

The next day, I tick off the jobs I get done - it sounds childish but it's very satisfying to see all those ticks, and the jobs that remain undone don't seem so important by comparison. I don't feel so guilty. Some of those unticked jobs no longer need doing, anyway - that's a bonus! The ones that still need attention can be put on the next day's list, possibly higher up. This little card just helps me accept that it's impossible to do it all and that I can be pleased with what I did get done. I feel much better."

Having a laugh

Teachers - probably out of necessity - usually have a pretty good sense of humour. Seeing the funny side certainly keeps stressful situations in perspective. Sharing a joke also creates a bond between people who work together.

-- *"My senior teacher cuts out jokes or cartoons and sticks them onto the 'what's on today?' notice that comes around each morning. Other teachers sometimes add one, too. Sometimes it's the sort of joke you can share with the kids - other times it's good for a private chuckle. It's always a nice start for the day."*

The pay-offs

These senior teachers, who are working out positive ways to deal with stress by taking control either of the causes or of their own responses, find that they are free to enjoy the real satisfactions of their job.

-- *"I love being the leader of a team of teachers, knowing that I had a part in building that team up, and seeing how individual teachers flourish in the stimulating and supporting climate we've got."*

-- *"I appreciate being treated by my principal as a valued colleague."*

-- *"It's good to have a real role with all the children in the school, not only my own class. They all know me, and children of all ages come and talk to me and show me things. I feel they're all under my wing."*

-- *"It's satisfying being able to help build school policy more than I could as a younger teacher. I can participate in making decisions with my principal and with the other teachers, and know that my contribution is valued."*

-- *"As deputy principal, I have an overview of the whole school as an organisation. I enjoy being in touch with parents, having a role on the school council, being recognised as a worthwhile person by the children, ancillary staff and other teachers. I'm also in a position to show people I appreciate them too. Because I don't have the principal's burden of ultimate responsibility, I am a little more free to respond to people. I can appreciate the way the system works and everybody's contribution to it. It's terribly hard work, but it's a great learning time for me to get ready to be a principal myself."*

-- *"Well, it's a challenge, anyway!"*

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New Zealand Educational Institute

About one month ago a questionnaire was mailed to you which solicited your cooperation in a research project initiated by the New Zealand Educational Institute on the causes and effects of teachers' stress. This project is being carried out by Philip Dewe of the Massey University Business Faculty. If you were kind enough to return that questionnaire please ignore this letter. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

So that the information gathered in this project will have maximum impact it is very important that we survey as large and as representative a group as possible. Many teachers have already responded and this survey would be greatly strengthened if we heard from the remainder of those contacted. We would be very grateful if you would complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it to Massey University in the envelope provided.

The information which you provide will be held in strictest confidence at Massey and will only be seen by those involved in the statistical analysis. As a further aid to confidentiality the questionnaire does not ask for information on the identity of either the respondent or the respondent's school. Any summarised information will be made available to the New Zealand Educational Institute or to any other interested party.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Gerry Brown

J. G. P. Brown
President
New Zealand Educational Institute

Philip Dewe
Massey University
Business Studies Faculty

Please attempt all questions. Do not spend a lot of time on any particular question. Your first answer or response (the one that immediately comes to mind) is probably the best one.

SECTION I

In this section we are interested in collecting information as to your background and teaching experience. Please answer each question by circling the appropriate number on the right hand side or by writing your answer in the box provided.

1 Sex
- Male 1
- Female 2

2 How old are you?

3 **Current** marital status
- Single 1
- Living together/married 2
- Separated/divorced/widowed 3

4 Which category of teacher are you?
- Year 1 teacher 1
- Year 2 teacher 2
- Year 3 teacher 3
- Year 4 teacher 4
- Other i.e. beyond 3rd year of certificated service 5

5 **If you are a year one teacher** leave out question 6 and go straight to question 7

6 Length of certificated service to nearest year
- Total certificated service
- Service at your present school

7 **Current** position held
- Teaching Principal 1
- Deputy Principal 2
- 2nd Deputy 3
- Senior Teacher Junior Classes 4
- Other Senior Teacher 5
- Teacher 6
- Special Class Teacher 7
- Assessment Class Teacher 8
- Regulation Teacher 9

8 What is the nature of your present appointment?
- Permanent 1
- Limited tenure 2
- Year one 3
- Long term relieving 4

9 How did you obtain your appointment?
- By application 1
- By placement 2
- By secondment 3

10 How many children are there in your class or home base unit?

11 What would be their average age in years?

12 Which best describes the design of where you teach most frequently?
- Purpose built open plan/variable space 1
- Converted open plan/variable space 2
- Conventional classroom 3
- Other (please describe) 4

13 Which best describes the organisation of your teaching?
- Team teaching 1
- Single class teaching 2
- Team teaching for some activities, single class teaching for some activities 3
- Other (please describe) 4

14 Do you have any additional staff to help or release you at least once a week for part of the school day. (Please circle one number in each row.)

	Yes	No
Paid ancillary staff e.g. teacher aide	1	2
Voluntary helper e.g. parent	1	2
Specialist teacher e.g. manual	1	2
Another teacher - senior teacher - part time teacher	1	2

15 What is the approximate number of children on the school roll at present, not including children in attached preschool groups?
- Enter number

16 Which adjective in your opinion best describes the school roll?
- Rising 1
- Stable 2
- Declining 3

Section II (In this section three types of answers are required for each item)

The statements which follow are all concerned with the problems you have in trying to carry out your job effectively. We would like you to think about the occurrence of the following items over the last full term. For each item we are interested to know **how often** it occurred, **how anxious** it made you and **how tired** it made you. Please indicate this by rating each item out of 5 on the frequency, anxiety and tiredness scales.

If an item did not occur at all score it 1 on the frequency scale and leave the other two scales blank.

Continually having to deal with pupils' lateness or truancy.

Difficulties in handling children who misbehave.

Children being very forthright—speaking their mind.

Children not accepting your authority.

Children using foul language or being impolite.

Children fighting or arguing with each other.

Children who do not appreciate the effort you are making.

Children who do not listen to instructions.

Children who are just not interested—unresponsive or poorly motivated.

Keeping the children occupied.

Children who always demand attention—won't let up.

Children clinging to you—physical pressure.

Overcrowding in the classroom.

Being with children for long periods of time without a break.

The noise level of the children.

Feeling that you are not getting across to the children.

The pressure to achieve the same standard with all children irrespective of the child's ability.

Never				Frequently	Not at all anxious				Extremely anxious	Not at all tiring				Extremely tiring
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

Children not using the opportunities that they have.

Having to deal with jealousy between children.

The children's expectations of you as a teacher being too high.

Feeling that you could do more for the children.

Lack of recognition for extra duties performed.

Little feedback on the quality of your teaching.

Inadequate equipment and resources.

Insecurity of tenure.

Lack of any effective consultation.

The poor promotional opportunities in teaching.

Poor school facilities (e.g. overcrowded classrooms, lack of hygiene etc.)

Poor school organisation.

A lack of any participation in decision making.

The unrealistic syllabus requirements for the children you teach.

The theft of teaching equipment.

Damage to the classroom or school.

The pressure to get the syllabus covered.

Not being adequately supported for curriculum change.

Never				Frequently	Not at all anxious				Extremely anxious	Not at all tiring				Extremely tiring
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

Not having enough time to prepare for lessons.

Having to give more time and financial commitment to extra-curricular and related school activities.

Too many things to do in a given time e.g. reports, records, returns, etc.

The demands on after-school time.

Having to do lots of things other than teaching (organise outings, collecting money etc.)

The lack of support from colleagues and senior staff.

Following directives you disagree with—from the head or other teachers.

The lack of commitment to teaching of some colleagues.

Being inadequately trained for the position.

Inadequate salaries.

Tensions in the staffroom.

Lack of inservice training opportunities.

Trying to conform to other teachers' and the school's expectation of you.

Other teachers interfering with the way you are dealing with the children.

Pressures from senior teachers as to how you should run your class.

Being expected to be an expert in every subject area.

A lack of professional backup staff (e.g. psychologists, visiting teachers etc.)

The amount of time spent travelling to and from school.

Being graded by inspectors.

Never Frequently	Not at all anxious Extremely anxious	Not at all tiring Extremely tiring
1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

Parents whose expectations of their child's learning ability is too high.

Parents who blame teachers for their own mistakes.

Parents who are just not enthusiastic about their children's education.

Parents who will not give their children the help that they need.

Having to deal with children's health, moral and physical welfare.

Having to teach children social values and skills.

Parents who expect a teacher to work miracles with their child.

Parents who expect they have a right to come and see you at any time.

Parents who expect you to give everything to their child and who are not aware of the rest of the class.

Parents who expect that teachers can solve all society's problems.

The feeling that few people are aware of what teachers actually do and put up with.

The feeling that teachers are required to maintain a high standard of behaviour both inside and outside of work.

The feeling that people have a low opinion of teachers—low status.

Being accountable to many different groups of people.

Parents who think teachers ought to be like teachers they had many years ago.

Never				Frequently	Not at all anxious				Extremely anxious	Not at all tiring				Extremely tiring
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION III

Please consider each statement in the list below and indicate how frequently you use such actions to cope with the problems of teaching.

	Never				Frequently
Do something enjoyable with the children at the end of the day	1	2	3	4	5
Establish some sort of teaching routine	1	2	3	4	5
Be well organised and planned	1	2	3	4	5
Make the children sit silently	1	2	3	4	5
Discipline—punish the children	1	2	3	4	5
Organise your classwork so that you can take a break	1	2	3	4	5
Stand up and make your point to the class	1	2	3	4	5
Have some other classroom activitity you can change to when the children begin to get restless	1	2	3	4	5
Try to always be consistent and honest when dealing with the children	1	2	3	4	5
Keep the children occupied	1	2	3	4	5
Separate a few children out and keep them away from the other kids for a while	1	2	3	4	5
Help each other share the teaching load	1	2	3	4	5
Have a quiet time in the classroom to settle the children down	1	2	3	4	5
Positively reinforce the children	1	2	3	4	5
Take short cuts on things you don't like doing	1	2	3	4	5
Behave in a very authoritarian manner	1	2	3	4	5
Revert to basic teaching skills—be very conservative in your approach	1	2	3	4	5
Talk the problem over with teaching colleagues	1	2	3	4	5
Try to get advice and suggestions from other more experienced teachers	1	2	3	4	5
Mix with people not connected with teaching	1	2	3	4	5
Lose temper with children	1	2	3	4	5
Get reassurance from other teaching colleagues that they are feeling the same way	1	2	3	4	5
Try and think objectively about the situation and keep your feelings under control	1	2	3	4	5
Have a sense of humour—just see the humour of the situation	1	2	3	4	5

	Never			Frequently	
Attempt to strike some balance between home and family life	1	2	3	4	5
Confront the principal with problems	1	2	3	4	5
Forget work when finished for the day	1	2	3	4	5
Just ignore any difficulties	1	2	3	4	5
Talk things over with your wife/husband when you get home at night	1	2	3	4	5
Simply take one day at a time	1	2	3	4	5
Think of the good things associated with teaching	1	2	3	4	5
Use the holidays to recuperate	1	2	3	4	5
Go and have a few beers or other drinks	1	2	3	4	5
Take tranquilizers	1	2	3	4	5
Try and get as much rest as possible so you will be fresh and alert at work	1	2	3	4	5
Just have a good cry	1	2	3	4	5
Try and prevent others from finding out about the pressures you are under	1	2	3	4	5
Become more involved in non teaching activities—hobbies, leisure etc.	1	2	3	4	5
Just accept that it is another job and just do it	1	2	3	4	5
Find time for quietness and solitude to unwind	1	2	3	4	5
Play sport with the children	1	2	3	4	5
Reconsider just how involved you are at work	1	2	3	4	5
Leave school as soon after 3 o'clock as possible	1	2	3	4	5
Don't let the childrens' problems become your own	1	2	3	4	5
Be very diplomatic in the staffroom	1	2	3	4	5
Simply avoid other staff members	1	2	3	4	5
Eat more	1	2	3	4	5
Try to reassure yourself that everything is going to work out all right.	1	2	3	4	5

	Never				Frequently
Throw yourself into work and work harder and longer	1	2	3	4	5
Analyse all the negative consequences so that you are prepared for the worst	1	2	3	4	5
Make a concerted effort to distract yourself with some fun or pleasurable activity	1	2	3	4	5
Take some of your work home and work on it there	1	2	3	4	5
Move on to some teaching activity that you know that you can get satisfaction from	1	2	3	4	5
Get mad at yourself and tell yourself that you could have avoided the situation.	1	2	3	4	5
Face the situation knowing that your family and wife/husband give you help and a sense of proportion to the problem	1	2	3	4	5
Express your irritation to other work colleagues just to be able to let off steam	1	2	3	4	5
Express your irritation and frustration to yourself—swearing, slamming things down, crumpling up pieces of paper	1	2	3	4	5
Decide to go out with the family or friends and enjoy yourself, forgetting about work problems for a time	1	2	3	4	5
Stand back and try and rationalise the situation	1	2	3	4	5
Consciously force yourself to slow down and take a longer view of things	1	2	3	4	5
Never take what people say personally	1	2	3	4	5
Cover up problems rather than deal with them	1	2	3	4	5
Let people know exactly where you stand	1	2	3	4	5
Make sure people are aware that you are doing your best	1	2	3	4	5
Whenever possible give your opinion about how things are done and the way things are going at school	1	2	3	4	5
Smoke more	1	2	3	4	5
Drink more tea or coffee	1	2	3	4	5
Take a day off	1	2	3	4	5
Just simply give up and accept what's happening	1	2	3	4	5
Just take your feelings out on whoever happens to be around	1	2	3	4	5

Section IV (Please write your answer in the space provided)

1 Are there any other problems which concern you in your job which have not been included in this questionnaire?

Please check to see that you have answered all questions.

Could you please return the questionnaire as soon as possible.

Thank you for your cooperation.

APPENDIX II

SELF-AWARENESS EXERCISE: EVENTS IN THE SCHOOL DAY

	Occurred:	Made me feel:	Made me feel:
	Never Frequently	Not at all anxious Extremely anxious	Not at all tired Extremely tired
Situation I: Work Overload			
Too many things to do in a given time (reports, returns, etc.)	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
The demands on after-school time	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Having to do lots of things other than teaching (organise outings, collect money, etc.)	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Having to give more time and financial commitment to extra-curricular and related school activities	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Not having enough time to prepare for lessons	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
The pressure to get the syllabus covered	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Lack of recognition for extra duties performed	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Situation II: Expectations of Parents and Others			
Parents who expect the teacher to work miracles with their child	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Parents who expect the teacher to pay continual attention to their child and who are not aware of the rest of the class	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Parents who blame teachers for their own mistakes	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Parents who expect that teachers can solve all society's problems	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

	Occured:	Made me feel:	Made me feel:
	Never Frequently	Not at all anxious Extremely anxious	Not at all tired Extremely tired
Parents whose expectations of their child's learning ability is too high	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Parents who think teacher ought to be like teachers they had many years ago	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Parents who expect they have a right to come and see you at any time	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Being accountable to many different groups of people	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
The feeling that teachers' standard of behaviour, both inside and outside of school, is constantly being scrutinised	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
The feeling that few people are aware of what teachers actually do and put up with	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
The feeling that parents have a low opinion of teachers, and regard teaching as a low-status profession	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

Situation III: Relationships in the Classroom

Feeling that you are not getting across to the children	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Difficulties in handling children who misbehave	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Children fighting or arguing with each other	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Children not accepting your authority	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Children who are just not interested, unresponsive, or poorly motivated	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Children who do not listen to instructions	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

	Occurred:	Made me feel:	Made me feel:
	Never Frequently	Not at all anxious Extremely anxious	Not at all tired Extremely tired
The noise level of the children is too high	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Children who always demand attention - won't let up	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Children who do not appreciate the effort you are making	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Children using foul language or being impolite	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Keeping the children occupied	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Having to deal with jealousy between children	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Children being very forthright	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

Situation IV: Unsupportive Parents and Difficult Children

Parents who are just not enthusiastic about their children's education	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Parents who do not give their children the help or reinforcement they need	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Damage to the classroom or school	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
The theft of teaching of teaching equipment	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Having to deal with children's health, moral and physical welfare	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Continually having to deal with pupils' lateness or truancy	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Having to teach children social values and skills	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Children using foul language or being impolite	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

	Occurred:					Made me feel:					Made me feel:				
	Never				Frequently	Not at all anxious				Extremely anxious	Not at all tired				Extremely tired
Situation V: The Physical Demands of Teaching															
Poor school facilities (e.g. lack of hygiene amenities, proper equipment, building or classroom needing repair, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Overcrowding in the classroom	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Being with children for long periods of time without a break	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Keeping the children occupied	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
The physical strain of children clinging to you	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Situation VI: Little Individual Control Over Various School Events															
Following directives you disagree with - from the head or other teachers	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
The lack of support from colleagues and senior staff	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
A lack of participation in decision making	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Poor school organisation	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Lack of any effective consultation	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Pressure from senior teachers as to how you should run your class	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Other teachers interfering with the way you are dealing with the children	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Tensions in the staffroom	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

	Occurred:	Made me feel:	Made me feel:
	Never Frequently	Not at all anxious Extremely anxious	Not at all tired Extremely tired
Little feedback on the quality of your teaching	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Trying to conform to other teachers' and the school's expectation of you	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Not being adequately supported for curriculum changes	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
The unrealistic syllabus requirements for the children you teach	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Inadequate teaching equipment and resources	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

APPENDIX III

SELF-AWARENESS EXERCISE: COPING STRATEGIES

I do this:

Coping Style I: Rational Task-Oriented Behaviour

	Never				Frequently
Try always to be consistent and honest when dealing with the children	1	2	3	4	5
Be well organised and planned	1	2	3	4	5
Think of good things associated with teaching	1	2	3	4	5
Be very diplomatic in the staffroom	1	2	3	4	5
Try to think objectively about the situation and keep your feelings under control	1	2	3	4	5
Establish some sort of teaching routine	1	2	3	4	5
Keep the children occupied	1	2	3	4	5
Positively reinforce the children	1	2	3	4	5

Coping Style II: Adopt a Conservative Approach to Teaching

Behave in a very authoritarian manner	1	2	3	4	5
Discipline - punish the children	1	2	3	4	5
Make the children sit quietly	1	2	3	4	5
Separate a few children out and keep them away from the other kids for a while	1	2	3	4	5
Stand up and make your point to the class	1	2	3	4	5
Revert to basic teaching skills - be very conservative in your approach	1	2	3	4	5

I do this:

	Never				Frequently
Coping Style III: Utilising Colleague Support					
Talk the problem over with teaching colleagues	1	2	3	4	5
Try to get advice and suggestions from other more experienced teachers	1	2	3	4	5
Get reassurance from other teaching colleagues that they are feeling the same way	1	2	3	4	5
Confront the principal with problems	1	2	3	4	5
Express your irritation to other work colleagues just to be able to let off steam	1	2	3	4	5
Coping Style IV: Putting Things into Perspective					
Let people know exactly where you stand	1	2	3	4	5
Whenever possible, give your opinion about how things are done and the way things are going at school	1	2	3	4	5
Make sure people are aware you are doing your best	1	2	3	4	5
Stand back and try to rationalise the situation	1	2	3	4	5
Consciously force yourself to slow down and take a longer view of things	1	2	3	4	5
Coping Style V: Become Less Involved					
Forget work when finished for the day	1	2	3	4	5
Just accept that it is another job and just do it	1	2	3	4	5
Leave school as soon as possible after 3 o'clock	1	2	3	4	5
Just ignore any difficulties	1	2	3	4	5

I do this:

	Never				Frequently
Don't take work home	1	2	3	4	5
Don't work harder or longer	1	2	3	4	5
Simply take one day at a time	1	2	3	4	5
Become more involved in non-teaching activities - hobbies, leisure, etc.	1	2	3	4	5

Coping Style VI: Attempts to Ride Out the Situation

Get mad at yourself and tell yourself that you could have avoided the situation	1	2	3	4	5
Just take your feelings out on whoever happens to be around	1	2	3	4	5
Just have a good cry	1	2	3	4	5
Express your irritation and frustration to yourself - swearing, slamming things down, crumpling up pieces of paper	1	2	3	4	5
Eat more	1	2	3	4	5
Just simply give up and accept what's happening	1	2	3	4	5
Try to prevent others from finding out about the pressures you are under	1	2	3	4	5
Analyse all the negative consequences so that you are prepared for the worst	1	2	3	4	5
Cover up problems rather than deal with them	1	2	3	4	5
Drink more tea or coffee	1	2	3	4	5
Simply avoid other staff members	1	2	3	4	5
Take a day off	1	2	3	4	5